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## Window on Jordan

# More young Jordanians are tying the knot through Al Afaf Charity

By Raed Al Abed  
Star Staff Writer  
"WOULD YOU believe it! It's with God's will our wedding happened. I had a feeling that our dreams will come true, but I had no idea that it would happen this way." This is how Abdel Ghani and Njoud described how they got married through Al Afaf Charity Society.

Abdel Ghani and Njoud were one of four other couples that were married in the first group wedding in the history of Jordan. The ceremony, held by the Al Afaf Society, was performed in October 1995. Another four couples joined the second group wedding on 19 July 1996, and the latest will take place this month on the 17th.

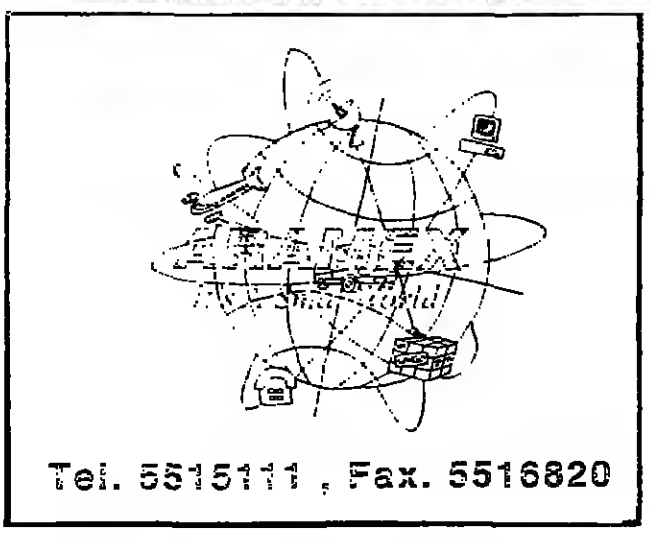
Getting married and starting a family is probably the number one concern for thousands of young Jordanians—after finding a job. But with hefty changing traditions and attitudes towards the requirements of couples in wedlock, many Jordanians are finding it difficult to get married. Since marriage, at a young age, is seen by Islam as an ideal precaution against social ills, Al Afaf Society has taken up the challenge to help young Jordanians join in holy matrimony.

Continued on page 2



# The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly



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**Le Jourdain**  
Supplément en français du Star

## Weeklies experience hard times as deadline to reorganize approaches

By Iham Sadeq  
Star Staff Writer  
THE DISPUTE between the government and the press over the implementation of the new Press and Publication (Temporary) Law is heading up as the deadline for the reorganization of newspapers approaches.

According to the law, all weekly newspapers are required to increase their capital to JD 300,000 before 15 August. The brunt is falling on weeklies as most would be unable to raise the required capital by the law.

All evidence suggest that the weeklies have to choose from four bitter options: Increase their capital, merge, close their doors or await the resolution of the Supreme Court.

Editors of eight weeklies have authorized Lawyer Hussein Mjalli, the Jordanian Lawyers Association president to file a case against the new press law. But, Mjalli is now busy in Al Dakanshah trial.

Weekly newspapers continue to reject the law and regard it as a way to kill freedom and democracy in the country. But the weeklies are obliged to deal with the temporary press law as *fait accompli*.

"The problem with the new press law lies in the capital, which should be raised to JD 300,000," Fahad Al Remawi, chief editor of *Al Majd Weekly* said.

"If we don't manage to raise our capital, then we don't have any other option but to close and give up. Such capital is illogical and can hardly be met," he told *The Star*.

Al Remawi pointed out that his weekly can register nominally the newspaper capital with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, but added the government won't agree to that. He pointed out that the government wants us to deposit all the amount stated in the law.

Nidal Mansour, chief editor of *Al Hadath weekly*, believes that "as long as the law remains the same, the weeklies have to find a way of adjusting their financial status to cope with its requirements."

"However, raising the weekly's capital to JD 300,000 amidst prevailing difficult economic conditions, is a heavy burden on weeklies," Mansour said.

# Islamist hardliners appear to be winning bid to boycott elections

By Raed Al Abed  
Star Staff Writer  
INTERNAL DIVISIONS within Jordan's Islamic movement over its participation in the November parliamentary elections have resurfaced pointing to a deep crisis. Two trends have emerged, pragmatic and traditional, and both are now at loggerheads.



Election fever: Islamists can't make up their minds

While the pragmatists support full participation by the Islamic movement in order to maintain presence in the political life of Jordan, the hardliners are openly calling on the leadership to boycott the November poll.

The internal strife, has weakened the 11-party opposition bloc, where the Islamic Action Front (IAF) is the leading party, and left the 'coalition' in confusion.

Within 10 days, the Islamic movement will take its historic decision: to participate in the coming elections, or not. So far, the hardliners appear to be winning the contest. The question is how will such a decision affect the unity of the once united Islamic movement: The Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the IAF.

"The majority within the movement see no use in contesting the elections," said Abdel Mone'm Abu Zunt, who appears to be the self-appointed leader of the hardliners. "The official decision to boycott the coming elections will be taken within 10 days."

However, the pragmatist trend believes that the Islamic movement will be the main

loser if it chooses to abstain from participating in the next elections.

Dr Ishaq Al Farhan, general secretary of the IAF, said the issue of participation in the coming elections is under extensive study. He told *The Star* that "we will consider all the circumstances and our options remain open. We have differences in views but this is natural."

Dr Farhan, a moderate within the movement, denied recent press reports that he had banded in his resignation from the Muslim Brotherhood. "I am still a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and I remain general secretary of the IAF," Farhan said.

"I am for our participation in the elections under any condition," said another Islamic deputy, Dr Bassam Al Umoush, who is considered a key activist in the moderate wing in the Islamic movement. "We are a reforming movement, which aims at spreading Islamic Da'wa," he said. "We founded our party [IAF] to participate in the political life in the country and parliament is the essence

## Violence in Hebron escalates as clashes continue

Agency Reports  
HEBRON, OCCUPIED West Bank—A Palestinian teenager has been shot dead in a clash between Israeli troops and Palestinians in Gaza. Violence also broke out again in the West Bank city of Hebron, where several Palestinians were wounded by rubber bullets.



Palestinian youth hurl stones at Israeli soldiers in Hebron

The confrontation in Gaza began when a group of about 200 Palestinians broke into a cultivated area near the Gush Katif settlement bloc, where bulldozers were leveling sand dunes.

Israeli soldiers opened fire, killing a 16-year-old Palestinian, Maher Al Assar, 16, of Jerr el-balah arrived at Shifa Hospital dead as a result of being shot with live ammunition in the chest," said Dr Mohammed Hasanein of Shifa Hospital.

Soldiers shot the boy as Palestinians demonstrated near the Gush Katif settlement bloc after Jewish settlers began work on a strip of land Arabs said belonged to them, witnesses said.

This was the second day of confrontations which left scores of Palestinians injured. Medics at a makeshift field hospital on the Palestinian side treated about 30 young men and boys for injuries, mostly minor, from rubber-coated steel bullets. One youth was hit in the head.

A few hundred yards up Shaleh Street, past the rocks and hard, cylindrical bullets that littered the road, other Hebron residents, did their shopping, carefully inspecting tomatoes, melons and crates of fresh fish. Few flinched at the sound of periodic gunfire.

It was another day in Hebron, a divided city that simmers these days with a feeling more akin to expectation than foreboding. With no one talking peace, an escalation is on the way, say the youths who dart in and out of the city's alleyways, taking aim at the Israeli soldiers guarding Jewish settler enclaves. And that's good, they say.

"We feel that something is coming," said Sharif Abdel Baaset, 19, who said proudly that he had been injured three times by the Israelis, most recently last week. "The Israelis are intensifying their actions, and we have to carry on the battle." As he spoke, a rubber bullet, fired by one of the soldiers on a nearby rooftop, struck a 12-year-old, Mohammed Daadreh, grimacing and blinking back tears, displayed an instant welt on his right shoulder.

The two Israelis were hurt when a pipe bomb was thrown from a rooftop onto troops in an alley below. Both men were hit in the legs by shrapnel, with one suffering severe injuries.

Palestinian police, who earlier in the day kept a peaceful demonstration away from the Jewish enclaves, were nowhere in sight as the rocks and bombs were thrown.

The Israeli military commander in Hebron, known only as Col. Gadi, said on an inspection tour that the incident represented "an escalation in the devices and the methods" used by the Palestinian youths, who have recently begun throwing gasoline-filled bottles and homemade bombs.

The commander also said the Palestinian security forces were not cooperating sufficiently with their Israeli counterparts to prevent violence. "We have coordination but no cooperation," he said.

The clashes came one day after the Israeli media reported that Israel and the Palestinians had agreed to resume their security cooperation, which deteriorated in March amid Palestinian anger over Israel's decision to launch construction of a new Jewish neighborhood in East Jerusalem. Peace talks

Continued on page 2

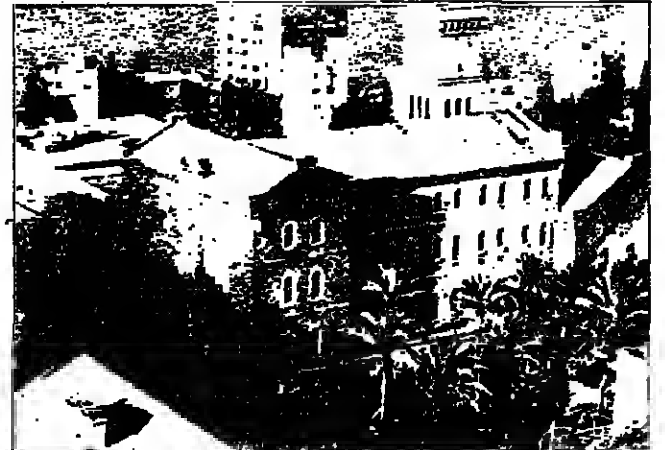
## Archeologists race to stay ahead of Beirut's bulldozers

By Ann LoLordo  
BEIRUT—For the past two years, Hans Curvers has followed the bulldozers of Beirut. A billion dollar campaign to rebuild the city's war-torn downtown has unearthed Beirut's archeological past. And Curvers has been there to stop the bulldozers from reducing the historic remains to rubble.

The success of his efforts—and those of other international archeologists and their Lebanese colleagues—can be found in the cavernous basement of St. George's Greek Orthodox Church, a storehouse for mosaics, architectural columns and buckets of pottery shards dating from the Iron Age to the Crusader's time. The excavations

have uncovered a Roman street of shops, the foundation of a Crusader castle and a "glacis," a sloped stone wall indicating the site of ancient or Iron Age Beirut—even an ancient dog cemetery.

"The quantities are quite impressive," Curvers admits. But time is running out. The discoveries were made during construction to replace Beirut's bomb-battered infrastructure: utility lines, sewers, roads. That work is nearing an end now. And as contractors prepare to build the skyscrapers and glass towers of the new city skyline, questions are arising over the future of the archeological sites unearthed so far. Some archeologists say Lebanon has neither the money nor the political



AUB: One of Beirut's archaeological landmarks

totalled \$25 billion. Harii, a billionaire developer, formed a development company to oversee the planned \$1.8 billion reconstruction. Two years ago, Solidere went to work. More than 600 buildings have been demolished; another 265 are expected to be restored. The initial work has focused on replacing Beirut's infrastructure—sewer pipes stretching 16 miles, 25 miles of water lines, a 240-megawatt power station.

Along the way, the bulldozers, front loaders and backhoes

churned up artifacts and remnants of Beirut's ancient past. The Lebanese Department of Antiquities, with funding from the United Nations, appealed to archeologists from around the world to come to Beirut. Teams from Britain, Holland, France and Italy responded to the call. Construction sites became archeological digs. But the Lebanese government couldn't raise the money to properly fund the excavations.

Solidere then hired Curvers to oversee the finds.

"I follow wherever a machine is digging," Curvers said, explaining his job. "I have a look. If they discover anything, I have them stop and we try to get a team to go in and start working fast."

The digs have turned up an impressive array of Beirut's past—Roman cooking pots, sev-

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Continued on page 2



## More young Jordanians are tying the knot through Al Afaf Charity

Continued from page 1

President of this unique society, Senator Abdel Latif Arabiat, is a conservative Islamist who said that "our Arab and Islamic society is suffering from imposed sick traditions and behaviors which threaten its structure."

He added that "we must work hard to enlighten people of the wisdom of our religion and emphasize its positive influence on our culture and thought."

Al Afaf, which in Arabic means 'chastity,' was founded in 1993. It is an independent charity that facilitates the process of marriage for couples who, because of financial hardship, would not otherwise be able to tie the knot as it were.

At the heart of the Afaf philosophy is a new vision of marriage and family values through firmly spreading the traditions of Islamic *Sharia*. In this respect too, Al Afaf also has a research center that concentrates on the study of the family and marital problems.

"The principle behind the Al Afaf fund is to protect society from spinsterhood and

celibacy and reorient people to the philosophy of marriage," said Mufeed Sirhan, director of the Al Afaf Society.

An Al Afaf study found that the number of men and women who are outside the circle of married life is growing at an alarming rate in this country.

Statistics show that 60 percent of women between the 20-25 age groups are no longer getting married. In the 25-30 age group for males the figure has grown to 45 percent.

According to the Unemployment and Poverty Survey of 1995, young people are getting married later on in life. In 1981 the average age for males was 26.8 and for females it was 22.8. Today however, the averages have gone up. The 1995 Survey points out that it is 28.6 for males and 24.8 for females.

Sociologists attribute this to the worsening economic situation, high cost of living, increase in unemployment and consequent rise in poverty. This is in addition to traditional marriage obligations which are becoming harder to maintain. The burden of the dowry and other expenses are taking

their toll on traditional attitudes towards marriage. More and more people are realizing that they simply can't afford to be married.

Mr Sirhan estimates the average "cost of marriage" in Jordan at JD 6000 to 7000. By a simple mathematical calculation, Sirhan added, "a university graduate who works in the public sector, and has a monthly salary of 200 dinars needs six years to save enough money to cover the initial cost of marriage."

This is partly why Al Afaf Charity was established. Marriage is basic to the Islamic doctrine and teachings.

In addition to organizing group weddings, Al Afaf, through the Islamic Bank, helps to arrange easy loans for young couples.

Since its foundation, about 500 persons received such loans.

"By group marriage, we seek to encourage people into matrimony," said Al



dow Sirhan, and "change the social traditions related to it. Also "we aim to deepen the principles of social cooperation and solidarity in society."

Since its existence, the charity established the "Al Afaf Fund" which is sometimes referred to as the "Marriage Fund."

The society relies on donations and wills. Furthermore, there are a number of

benefactors who frequently contribute to the fund. Some are even people who intend to get married.

"These amounts are deposited in the bank for the purposes of accumulation," said Al Sirhan.

Al Afaf will open branches in other areas of the Kingdom sometime this year.

## Weeklies experience hard times as deadline to reorganize approaches

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"Giving us three months to reorganize our finances is insufficient. Establishing big investment companies, especially in the media requires time to attract large scale investors."

However, Mansour added that contacts are going on to establish a large company with the participation of some prominent political and economic figures who are willing to invest in media publications. Though the picture is still not clear, Mansour said, it is encouraging.

If these weeklies fail to raise their capital, Mansour added, they will be given an additional three-month period to either adjust their financial status or their license will be revoked.

Al Meehraq is also seeking to

attract capital. Its managing editor, Hassan Ababneh told *The Star* "we have called for new investors in our weekly in a bid to maintain our presence." He affirmed that the paper has already taken a "decision to stay in the market under whatever conditions."

"We are trying our best to establish a big shareholding company to increase capital and continue with our publication."

But Ababneh is under no illusion. Speaking frankly, he said the interest of investors in newspapers is not that much.

Another option for local weeklies is to merge. Regarding this possibility, the three chief editors, Ababneh, Remawi and Mansour pointed out that contacts have been made on the issue but no tangible results have been



achieved so far.

They all agreed that mergers may be at the cost of the ideological perspectives of the different weeklies.

In addition they may arise financial problems that would hinder such mergers. For instance, if the weekly is to be sold, the issue of its fiscal status and debts will be in

dispute.

Despite the fact that the three chief editors are preoccupied these days with adjusting their finances, they stress that they are against the new press law. The only thing they can do now is hope that a case against the government will be filed in the Supreme Court.

## Islamist hardliners appear to be winning bid to boycott elections

Continued from page 1

However, support for the moderates appears to be thinning especially as in view of recent internal and external developments.

"Currently, the movement is holding a new survey to measure the movement's mood on the participation," said Al Umoush.

There are several reasons behind the shift in mood within the Islamic movement. On top of these is the belief that the IAF had failed to influence policy during the past parliament. In particular policies regarding peace with Israel and normalization.

"If we participate or not, normalization with the Zionist enemy will continue," said Abu Zuhair. "Statements, demonstrations and opposition will change nothing. Our shouts are falling on the government's deaf ears."

However, experts in Islamist affairs are doubtful



Farhan

about the intentions of the leadership of the Islamic movement to boycott the elections. They say the on-going debate is a form of "political maneuvering" to pressure the government.

Mr Ziyad Abu Ghunima, a former leading member in the Muslim Brotherhood who was expelled from the movement four years ago, said the Islamic movement is bluffing in order to strengthen its negotiating stand with the government. He added the movement hopes to rebuild its popularity while negotiating a deal with the government.

"Members of the Islamic movement are disappointed with their leadership. The threat to boycott the elections is aimed at cooling down tempers within the movement," Abu Ghunima said.

But observers believe that if the movement decides to boycott the elections, it will be breaking up a 40-year-old truce with the government. "Being out of the political race will threaten the unity of the Islamic movement, and will risk its historical relations with the regime," said one moderate Islamist who preferred not to be identified. He added that such a controversial decision will be viewed as one taken over principles not on issues.

Meanwhile, the IAF's other 10 partners in the opposition coalition find the current debate within the Islamic movement disturbing. The leftists and the pan-Arabists are holding extensive meetings to come out with a joint list of candidates to contest the elections.

The 11-party opposition released a statement last week asking voters to prepare themselves for the coming election as these parties will fight for a bigger representa-

tion in the coming parliament. The statement was signed by all the 11 parties including the IAF.

"We released this statement to encourage people to participate in the elections, because we feel that the public is demoralized," said Mr Salim Al Nahas, secretary general of the People's Democratic Party (Hashd).

Mr Nahas, who is a periodic president of the council of secretary generals of the 11-party opposition, maintained that "all the opposition parties including the IAF will participate in the parliamentary elections."

## NMC organizes summer music course

FOLLOWING ITS annual summer tradition, the National Music Conservatory (NMC/Noor Al-Husseini Foundation) is organizing a summer music course to be held at the NMC from 5-31 July. The course aims at providing all interested from all ages, the opportunity to make use of the summer course in enhancing their performance skills.

This year's summer course includes individual lessons on oud, qanoun, nay, violin, viola, cello, contrabass, flute, clarinet, oboe, saxophone, piano, guitar as well as individual lessons on the harp which has been recently introduced as one of the musical instruments to be taught at the NMC.

The course also includes group lessons in Music Reading (Sol-feggio and dictation) and Theory. Both private and group lessons are held twice a week and are supervised by highly qualified faculty members of the NMC.

## Archeologists race to stay ahead of Beirut's bulldozers

Continued from page 1

eral thousand square meters of mosaics, an ancient "suk" or marketplace.

"It's a dream but it's a nightmare," says Rossmeil, a Dutch archaeologist who is helping to dig along some of the 3 million pottery shards discovered.

The present day Beirut has uncovered a wealth of ancient structures, including the 1844 rebuilding of the city, said Curvers.

"History really repeats itself," said the archaeologist.

And yet, despite the damage of the past, new discoveries are being found. Take the "glass" structure dating from 900 B.C. While trying to determine the depth of the sloped wall, Curvers hit upon some rectangular structures. "They are the enigma now," he said, during a recent tour of the site.

The plan is to build an archaeological park around the new buildings of Beirut, a park that would record the history of Beirut from the Bronze Age through the Crusader times. Curvers wants to begin the park with the Roman-Byzantine street that was uncovered during the infrastructure work.

"Restore one shop completely," he said, standing over the remains of the small commercial area where archaeologists found scales and coins. "At least show as much to the public or use this will disappear underground."

A key issue during the reconstruction has been balancing the needs of the developer with those of the archaeologists. For the developer, time is money. An investment in unearthing archaeological finds can add to a project's costs. And it can result in a change of plans. The proposed path of a major road would cut through the excavation of the ancient city of Beirut; the developer is looking at alternatives.

Curvers gives his boss an estimate of the time needed for a dig some times, he said, he has been asked to work double shifts to complete the work.

He also has the task of cataloging the material for the Lebanese Department of Antiquities—data, is being entered into eight computers—and educating the Lebanese archaeology students about their responsibility in preserving their heritage.

Funding for the dig is a problem: a small team of archaeologists costs about \$50,000 a month, said Helen Sader, the American University professor, who has worked on the site. Solidere, the development company, has spent about \$8 million on the archaeological work.

But Sader worries that once Solidere sells off parcels of land to begin reconstruction of the cityscape, economic considerations will outweigh archaeological concerns.

"This is a city that must be rebuilt. We are dealing with billions of dollars. Solidere is not willing to lose money for the archaeology and the state has no money to expropriate this land," she said, during a visit to her university office in Beirut. "The state just looks the other way. What is done is done."

Sader said the developers had every reason to know what lay beneath the war rubble and they should have planned for it. She said a 1920 city plan drafted by the French indicates the area of the old ancient city. More information was produced during 1950s and the Department of Antiquities performed an archaeological survey in 1969, said Sader.

"They did not deal with this," said Sader. "This is an unjustifiable omission. They had enough information to take the archaeology into consideration. The future of the archaeological projects remains uncertain."

Meanwhile, Hans Curvers follows the bulldozers. "I am trying to understand the developer's point of view," said Curvers. "We cannot stay in this ivory tower without looking at reality, economics or traffic."

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## JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

### Farmers are angry over tomato paste

Local farmers are angry with the recent Spanish veto over the size of Jordanian tomato paste entering countries of the European Union as initiated between Jordan and the EU in the last Malta Conference in May. General Secretary of the Farmers Union, Rakan Al Faour said the Spanish veto came as a great surprise. Farmers are now calling for the boycott of Spanish products coming into Jordan.

### Rumble in a tumble

Chaos was the name of the game in Al Fuheis last week. About 300 youths broke into the Arizona club creating mayhem in the club, and destroying chairs and tables. The youths say that the place which was originally licensed as a cafe was later turned into a night club serving alcohol. It was this that heightened tempers. Situated in a residential area, the locals became angry and wrote to officials in the Fuheis Municipality, in that regard, but with no success. The latest incident by local youths was a last desperate attempt to close down the place that was gaining quite a reputation. The Fuheis Mayor, Anton Adiet denies having given a license for the coffee shop to be turned into a night club.

### Tawjhi exams over

The Tawjhi is effectively over. After what proved to be an eventful year characterized by break-ins into the examination rooms in Salt during the first weeks of the exams, students appear now to be home and dry. Now the long wait till the third week in August. But a couple of incidents did take place. It was reported that a student attempted to sit one of the exams for his brother in one of the areas in Amman. He was caught in the process by one of the invigilators and taken to the police. It was only after much "tribal" intervention that the youth was allowed to go. Needless to say the examination paper of the student was torn up. In another incident some students in the examination halls tried to run away with the exam papers and the answer book, but they were soon apprehended by the invigilators.

### Tunnel to be completed by 10 July

It's almost completed. Well, nearly. The tunnel under the King Talal Square on the Third Circle will be completed by 10 July, according to Amman Mayor Dr Mamdouh al Abadi. He said the tunnel will reduce the traffic congestion that used to characterize the Third Circle.

### Student politics

Politics is the name of the game these days. No sooner had the summer semester at the University of Jordan started than students began knocking on the door of the Interior Ministry. They are demanding the formation of a new political party that would be limited to students. The new party, titled Ansar Al Balad (Supporters of the Country) is an apolitical party that deals with social issues according to Al Sabeel.

### Hail the left!

The Peoples Democratic Party has decided to enter the election flurry. After its annual conference and with the reelection of general secretary Salem Al Nahass, the party is set to go. Al Nahass said the party's decision to run for November election is part of its attempt to widen the number of opposition deputies in the next Lower House of Parliament.

# Al Dakamseh's trial takes a surprising turn

AMMAN (Star)—After 13 sessions of the trial of Corp. Ahmed Al Dakamseh, the soldier who is charged with shooting seven Israeli schoolgirls in Baqura on 13 March, the defence team appear to be adopting a different strategy. They are now saying that the defendant is suffering from a "mental disorder", and thus not responsible for his actions.

The testimony of the two defence psychologist witnesses Mohammed Kanan and Ahmed Ali Khalaf came as a turning point. It can positively change the direction of the trial and helps the military court to pass a less severe sentence than the expected expected death penalty.

The psychologist stressed that the defendant at the time of the shooting, was possessed with what they called "anti-social mental neurosis." This is a personality disorder that leads to a mental disorder.

The two witnesses stressed that Al Dakamseh must be transferred to psychiatric hospital for a one-month continuous observation.

The doctors' testimonies completely contradict former reports made by military physicians (court witnesses) who repeatedly pointed out that Al Dakamseh is mentally sound, but suffers personality disorders.

"It is possible that Corporal Dakamseh, shot the girls in a stage of confusion, that resulted from provocation," said psychologist Ahmed Ali Khalaf. He said in this state of bewilderment, shooting could be considered a symptom of personality and is instinctual.

In addition to hearing the testimony of the two defence psychologists, the court, and over a six-hour session last Sunday heard the defence testimony of nine witnesses, among them two other psychiatrists who treated Dakamseh in a military clinic in early 1990s.

They all affirmed that Dakamseh, who suffers from a personality disorder, wouldn't have control over his actions. They added, if provoked he becomes easily angry and react impulsively without being conscious of his behaviour. Mohammed Hazyimeh, one psychiatrist who previously

treated the defendant said "In the moment of action, those people do not distinguish between what is right and what is wrong."

Dr Hazyimeh said that in 1994 he made a report on the corporal stating that he suffered from a personality disorder.

Another defence witness Dr Lutfi Al Khasawneh, who also examined the defendant, said "a person suffering from an anti-social personality acts violently and lose control of his actions, especially if being provoked." He added that these people might suffer from loss of consciousness and do not recognize what they are doing. "In this case, patients lose contact with the outside world."

In spite of this, the prosecution still charges the defendant of plotting to kill the Israeli girls intentionally, since the latter confirmed that he was provoked by the school girls as they made sarcastic gestures at him while he was praying.

Corporal Dakamseh told the court last week that he might have reacted unconsciously and shot the Israeli girls while he was under the influence of sleeping pills.

However, the corporal reacted angrily when he listened in the testimony of Maj. Fayrouz Al Sayigh, one of the two psychology experts who examined the defendant, and described him as having a deviant sexual behaviour and engaging in "bestiality, paedophilia and homosexuality." She confirmed that she was ready to show the videotape of her interview with Dakamseh to the court.

Al Dakamseh rejected such claims by Al Sayigh. He also denied detailing his sexual behaviour Maj. Al Sayigh.

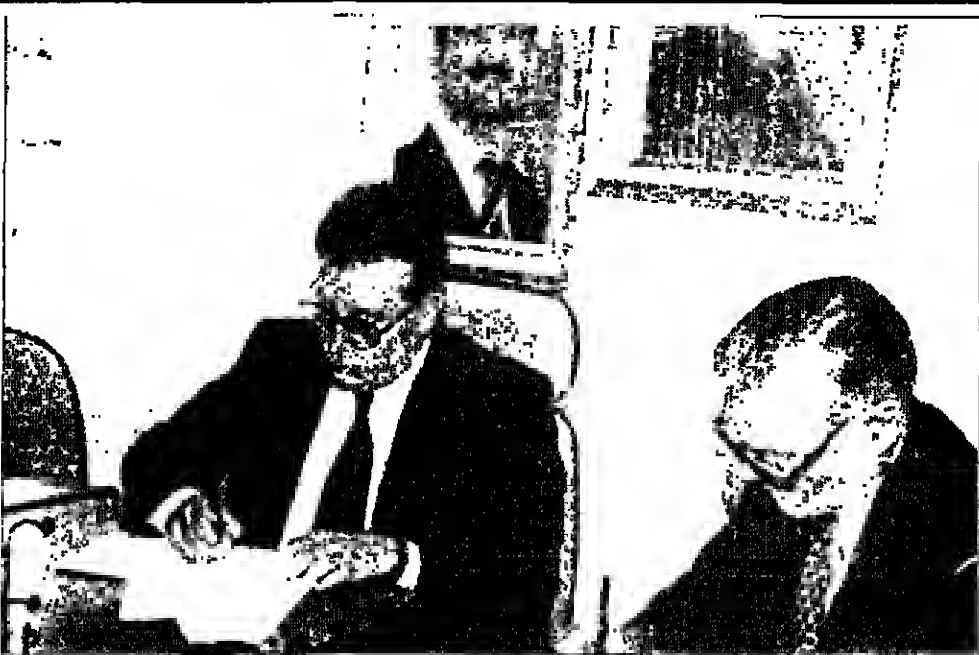
The defendant described Al Sayigh's report as "false" and meant to "tarnish his image and reputation," and he stressed that "I refuse to tell a woman about my sexual life."

However, the court rejected Sayigh's suggestion and upheld Mjalli's view that such



a showing in court is illegal. Next session is to be convened next Saturday, 5 July.

During last week's court sessions several members of Dakamseh's family, including his wife and mother testified as defence witnesses. They confirmed that Al Dakamseh is short-tempered and violent and often self-destructive.



AD Dustour General Manager Seif El Sherif signs an agreement with Deputy Managing Editor of the Financial Times Syndications Manager Maurice Gent, Tuesday. The agreement allows AD Dustour exclusive use of material from the British-based newspaper. The agreement includes The Star English weekly. Attending the signing ceremony were AD Dustour's Chief Editor Dr Nabil El Sharif and the Star's Chief Osama El Sherif.

## A story of success Jordan's textbook publishing

TWO YEARS after the end of a five-year Curriculum Reform and Textbook Project, funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), British monitoring consultants have given the Ministry of Education's publishing operation a clean bill of health.

British consultants, Mr Tony Read and Ms Amanda Buchan, visited Amman from 12-19 May to review progress and propose, as necessary, a small maintenance programme to areas with minor problems. In the opinion of the consultants, "Jordan's Curriculum Reform and Textbook Project must rank as the single most successful textbook development project in the world, and the sustainability of the operation has been clearly demonstrated".

The Curriculum Reform and Textbook Project has been an ambitious and unique example of the development of publishing capacity, to international standards, to produce textbooks incorporating the new methodology that encourages a student centered learning approach.

The Ministry of Education has just completed the curriculum reform program comprising 563 completely new textbooks and teachers' guides for all subjects across grades from 1-12. This tremendous exercise required the detailed design, approval, and implementation of new curricula, writing, editing, manuscript preparation, design, production, distribution, evaluation and publication of revised instructional materials.

Since the British support project terminated, the Ministry of Education's publishing operation has continued without external assistance. The overall performance of the publishing operation has been successfully maintained, and in a number of important sectors there have been highly significant developments.

Jordan's school textbook publishing is now one of the leaders in the Arab world. Jordan has provided technical assistance to Yemen and Sudan and individual staff members trained under the project, operate as occasional specialist consultants in the region. The publishing department is regularly visited by other countries in the region.

In 1987 the Ministry of Education had virtually no capacity in school textbook publishing. Ten years on, the publishing unit has fully trained professional staff responsible for editing, copy editing, manuscript preparation, illustrations, design and production management. Design, illustrations, typesetting, publishing management and distribution systems have been computerized in line with international professional publishing standards.

British support, funded by the DFID and managed by the British Council in Amman, has included the provision of long-term consultants in design, production, editorial, and Science/Maths education and short term consultants in management, computerisation, distribution and evaluation. In addition, training attachments and study visits to the UK and provision of books and equipment have taken place.

The support has resulted in a self-sustaining publishing operation which can be an example for replication in countries with similar environments. It must be emphasised that the Ministry of Education is not involved in a commercial, competitive publishing environment, as yet, hence departments such as sales, marketing, advertising and promotion are not relevant.

Jordan has embarked on a comprehensive 10-year Education Reform Programme, launched in 1989. The overall aim of the reform program is to put in place policy and institutional changes that will result in an upgrading of Jordan's human resources base into an increasingly skills-adaptable work force, capable of responding flexibly to changing domestic or external labour market needs and opportunities. The aim is thus to develop an education system that emphasises problem solving, critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to apply information in creative, productive and relevant ways.

The British Government through the DFID has provided assistance to Jordan's Education Reform Programme, under Phase 1 of the reform. In the following areas: Computers in Education, In-Service Teacher Training and Curriculum Reform and Textbook Production. Support is currently being provided, under Phase 2 of the reform program, to develop the General Examination and school assessment systems.

For more information please contact: Director, Dr David Burton, OBE Manager Development and Training Services; Mrs Azza Hammoudi



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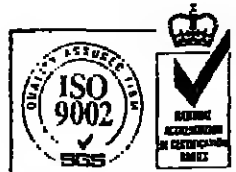
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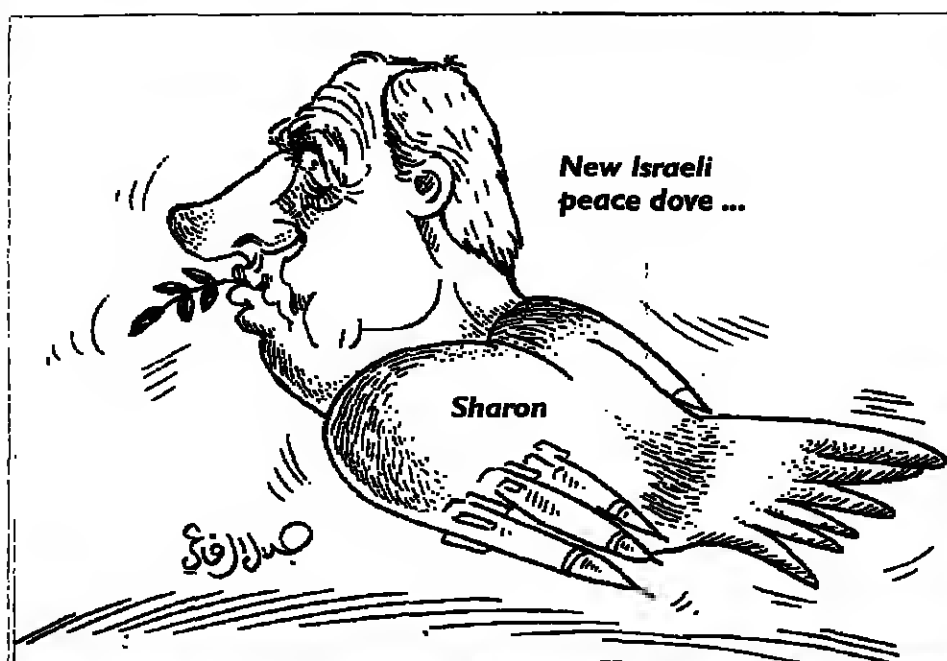


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## Our Say...

### Dealing with our European business partners

SPAIN'S UNEXPECTED objection to an item in the proposed Jordan-European partnership agreement related to exporting Jordanian tomato paste to the EC market has caused disappointment in Jordan especially among farmers. The draft agreement, which was initiated in April in Malta, is currently being debated by the European Parliament. It will then be sent to each member state for ratification before it finally goes into effect. This will not happen overnight and before the final draft is adopted, it will undergo many changes and amendments. That's the way agreements work and that's what Jordanians must understand.

Spain's veto must not be seen as a breach of friendly relations with Jordan. Our farmers, who are right to feel frustrated by this unexpected turn of events, cannot expect such issues to be solved by calling for an outright boycott of Spanish goods. In the final analysis, the partnership agreement is an economic, not political, form of cooperation between Jordan and the countries of the European Union. The advantages for Jordan, once the agreement is ratified, are tremendous. Spain's support within the European club of nations is important for Jordan. We should not be hasty as to wage our own economic war—a war we stand to lose—against an important member of this community.

An agreement of this nature is bound to create some opposition from representatives of member countries. Their main concern is to protect the interests of their own constituents, Spanish farmers included. But what concerns us here is that the Spanish veto does not mean the end of the partnership agreement. On the contrary, Jordanian officials will now meet again with their European counterparts to negotiate a compromise and in the process they can negotiate for better conditions in other provisions within the agreement.

What is important here is for us to understand that we should deal with our future European partners as business partners and not opponents. Agricultural policy is one of the pillars of the European Community today. Such a policy is creating controversy even among community members. French farmers criticize their own government for not doing enough to stem the flood of Spanish produce into their own markets. But such issues are not solved in reactionary ways. Politicians spend days and even weeks debating quotas and prices among other things before reaching a compromise. In essence they are guided by the norms of free market economy where barriers should be removed rather than built. Even within Europe such barriers are still being dismantled.

As a newcomer to this vast economic market, we should appreciate the long-term value of our new status as partners with Europe. We should learn to negotiate our way into gaining better deals and opportunities. We cannot expect to reap all the gains in a single day.

We hope that our farmers will realize that the Spanish position is not aimed at them in particular. We hope they will support our government's effort to renegotiate this particular obstacle and future ones, if they arise, to guarantee the expected benefits that we all stand to gain from.

### Israeli defames prophet Mohammad.

Handcuffed! Tatiana Susnik, a 25-year-old extreme right wing Israeli, who distributed a cartoon defaming Prophet Mohammad and the Koran is being taken to an Israeli court, Sunday. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu condemned such posters plastered on the walls of around 20 Arab shops in Hebron.

"This is an intentional crime that our people will not forget and proves it's impossible to live with Jews," Hamas said in a statement.



## China sees Hong Kong as a showcase, but security aims could spoil the view



The Chinese flag is hoisted by the soldiers of the People's Liberation Army in a handover ceremony marking the end of the 156 years of British rule in Hong Kong, Monday.

By Steven Mufson

HONG KONG—The end of Britain's reign over Hong Kong erases the last symbol of China's humiliation at the hands of Western powers a century and a half ago. However, the July 1 return of this city to Chinese control is forcing Beijing leaders to choose between two conflicting goals.

On the one hand, China's leaders are eager to demonstrate that Beijing can run a modern, sophisticated city, and that Hong Kong can remain as stable and prosperous under Chinese administration as it has been under British rule. To achieve that would require a hands-off approach, letting Hong Kong be Hong Kong.

On the other hand, China is eager to assert its authority over a territory whose open expression and recent experiment with democracy could spark popular demands for political liberalization in the rest of China. In doing so, China might have to take a more heavy-handed approach that could alter the very nature of this unusual enclave on the southern tip of the mainland.

How China reconciles these two conflicting goals carries huge stakes, not only for Hong Kong, but for all of China and its leadership, particularly Jiang Zemin, the president and Communist Party chief, who presided over the transfer ceremony.

In less than three months, Jiang will face a Communist Party congress—the first since 1992—where he hopes to consolidate his leadership position following the death of his mentor, the late supreme leader Deng Xiaoping. Any problems that come up in Hong Kong could make it trickier for Jiang to rally the party around him and could provide fodder for his political foes.

Deng bequeathed this dilemma to the Chinese leadership. When he struck a deal in December 1984 with then-British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher for the return of Hong Kong, he promised to maintain a system of "one country, two systems," to preserve Hong Kong's capitalist system and adhere to a mutually agreed Basic Law for at least 50 years.

It was a formula he called "a product

of dialectical Marxism and historical materialism." Thatcher called it an "ingenious idea." But Deng never spelled out how China would exercise its authority in the territory.

How the two systems would co-exist was not any clearer after a speech by Foreign Minister Qian Qichen was published recently in the Chinese Communist Party mouthpiece, *People's Daily*.

"The central government's policies will not infringe upon the interests of Hong Kong," Qian said. "We also hope things will not emerge in Hong Kong that will infringe upon Hong Kong's interests or the national interest."

The reasons for a hands-off policy toward Hong Kong are simple. This city of 6.3 million people has provided more than half of the foreign investment in China. With tremendous pressure to create more than 130 million jobs during the current five-year plan, China's leaders can ill afford to kill the Hong Kong goose and lose its golden eggs.

"As China continues to reform, to build its economy and construct a modern society, Hong Kong will serve a key role in bridging us with the world market," Qian said. "Therefore the sustained prosperity of Hong Kong is in the interest of China."

But while Beijing's leaders want to welcome Hong Kong back into the fold, they also want to keep it a city apart. And those reasons are linked to the nature of Chinese politics and dominance of the Communist Party.

China is worried about the possible spread of Hong Kong's nascent democracy, feisty newspapers and often sharp criticism of Chinese leaders—all considered normal here but impermissible on most parts of the mainland.

Normally, in China those who question the Communist Party's monopoly on power land in jail. And while US politicians regard public debate as a sign of democracy's strength, Chinese leaders treat public debate as a sign of weakness.

Chinese leaders have promised to stick to their pledge to protect free speech here. On the other hand, they have warned that they won't let Hong Kong be a base for "subversion."

In his speech Qian urged Hong Kong democrats to stop criticizing Beijing. "We do not ask them to approve of China's socialist system," Qian said. "We only ask them to love the motherland, (and) to love Hong Kong."

It remains to be seen whether China will tolerate the degree of freedom to which Hong Kong has become accustomed. How will the change affect, for instance, sales and promotion of a book of the prison letters of Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng, currently serving a 14-year sentence in a Chinese jail?

Jiang's handpicked chief executive for Hong Kong, shipping magnate Tung Chee-hwa, has set forth laws to roll back recent British initiatives and impose tighter limits on civil liberties.

The laws, which the new Beijing-picked provisional legislature will adopt in the wee hours of the first day of Chinese rule, are seen as an effort to reassure China that Tung is prepared to limit the extent of dissent and prevent Hong Kong's relatively open system from spreading over the border.

But keeping a political wall around Hong Kong will not be easy. Hong Kong's influence on China could be as great as China's on Hong Kong.

In Guangdong province most people can watch Hong Kong television, including reports of people's taking to the streets, debating in the legislature, complaining openly about schools or criticizing Chinese leaders. Those Guangdong residents are likely to wonder: If people in Hong Kong can have these freedoms, why not us?

Guangdong people will not be the only ones closely watching developments in Hong Kong. Problems here could wreck Jiang's efforts to persuade Taiwan to return to the Chinese fold under a "one-country, two-systems" formula similar to the one being used here.

That in turn could undermine Jiang's authority and create an opening for Chinese military leaders who favor a more aggressive, military option for winning back Taiwan, a self-governing island that China regards as a renegade province.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

### Vietnam

## Horrors of a pointless war

A *Wavering Grace: A Vietnamese Family in War and Peace*, by Gavin Young, London, Viking, 238 pages.

GAVIN YOUNG'S is the second Vietnam memoir to be published in a little over a year. The first, Jon Swain's sweetly sorrowful *River of Time*, was a foreign correspondent's story, an elegy to love, war and opium in Indo-China. A *Wavering Grace* is a more painful and complicated tale "an ugly story." Young writes but it ends up being an elegy too.

Young first went to Vietnam as a correspondent for the *Observer* in 1965, and within a few months had decided to write about the country as much as possible through Vietnamese eyes. He was helped in this by his friendship with an ordinary Vietnamese family. The book tells the story of that friendship over 30 years, through war, repression, and finally now, almost miraculously to Gavin Young, though too late for some of his Vietnamese friends an increasingly open peace.

When Young met Madame Bong and her family they

were living in Hue. "the flower of Vietnamese cities." Mme Bong had lost her husband to the French war of the 1950s, but she had a comfortable life in a bustling little house. Van, her oldest son, was about to join the army, while Minh, her younger son, and Que, a sort of adopted son, were students.

In the years that followed, Hue was "virtually destroyed." Van was killed in action. Minh and Que were imprisoned for seven years in re-education camps, and the redoubtable, generous Mme Bong, tracked down and questioned by Young in 1985, could only whisper, "Too dangerous, too dangerous, and weep." "I had never considered the possibility that Mme Bong would cry about anything. When she burst into tears the effect was unbelievably shocking."

Young relates all this with a ponderous anxiety that seems oddly unjournalistic, until one realizes that here is a writer for whom the people he writes about have become more important than the story. In the years after 1985, when letters (many of them included in the book) were al-

lowed in and out of Vietnam, Young kept in touch with the Bong family, helping several of them to leave the country, assisting others who became boat people, and even lending money to Mme Bong's son-in-law so that he could buy a house in the US.

Young's personal involvement with Vietnam and his natural sympathies for the "relatively poor but happy peoples" who "wanted only to get on with their peaceful humdrum lives" might make him in some eyes an unreliable analyst of his recent history, and he admits that when he returned there in 1985, despite the horror stories from boat people, he was still surprised by the level of communist repression.

But Young is too painstakingly honest a writer to let his own sympathies colour his understanding of events, and he has no trouble blaming communists and Americans equally for the destruction of his beloved Hue, or writing sadly that his Vietnamese friends were trapped between the "cruelty and corruption of communism and the repression" of America and its allies

in Saigon. Moreover, he does not need to say himself how pointless the American war in Vietnam was. He leaves that to Robert Young who published a book in 1995 acknowledging that the Americans "were terribly wrong, the war could and should have been avoided."

The horror of a pointless war is Young's underlying theme, and he twice quotes Graham Greene's words from *The Quiet American* about politicians waging war until they "agree to the same peace that we could have had at the beginning, making nonsense of all these years."

Of course there was no peace agreement in Vietnam the Americans lost the war and were chased ignominiously out of the country. But there is another invasion now, a cultural and economic one, and the irony is that the Americans are winning this without even trying. Gavin Young's elegy is not only for the Vietnamese lost to napalm and re-education, but the Vietnam that is increasingly being lost to Coca-colonization.

Financial Times Syndication

### Middle East Beat by Khairi Jamb

#### Turkish Identity

IT HAS become fashionable, in academic circles, to start probing the question of identities of societies that are multi-ethnic, and multi-denominational.

The issue has taken prominence recently as a natural progression of nation building and nationalism, or at times, from the advocacy of dissolution and fragmentation. However, it seems that the absence of a real and crystallised sense of ideology has contributed a great deal to the degeneration of the current trends of intellectual thought. Ideology has become synonymous with hate, and natural coexistence has been replaced by the notion of natural conflict.

To discuss Turkey in the context of identity is no different than discussing other countries. But the addition of Refah and ex-Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan to the Turkish social formula has made the subject much more vibrant than it would have otherwise assumed. Popular voices in Turkey and beyond have called for the return of the country to its original Islamic roots. But within the country, and beyond, forces are also calling for the preservation of the secular culture that has characterized Turkey for almost 80 years.

Turkey in plain words, is part of Europe as well as Asia, a Mediterranean country and a Balkan state. A full member of NATO, and an associate of the EU, but at the same time it is a signatory to the recent trade agreement with eight Islamic countries.

In essence, it is a country with a multitude of options and a variety of geographical connections. Would it be practical, or even logical, to start pulling the country towards an Islamic pole, or a European one? And does it make much sense, to trace an ethos shaped by an empire that has no relevance to modern-day Turkey, or seek the alternative of the unwritten book of secularism?

These issues became more distinct when Refah was in power. It was not the first time that Mr Erbakan assumed a high political position in Turkey. His views were never hidden from the Turkish public in the past, and under previous political party banners it was still political Islam that he advocated.

What has changed is not the circumstance in as much as the actions and perceptions of the nature of political Islam. The choice of becoming either dominated by an Islamic government, or a secular one, panicked the divergent interest groups in the country, and set the motion of policy studies among international think-tanks.

Again to be put in the position of stark choices is in itself as dangerous, as pulling Turkey towards one cultural heritage or another. Islam is part of Turkey but the western cultural outlook is an important part too. To burn bridges when they already exist in a natural state, is a folly that cannot be rectified, and it turns the country's natural strength into a crisis of confidence and fear from facing the next century. Islamophobia is as bad as conspiratorial, fearing western civilization and its achievements. It would be sad not to witness democratic pluralism hand in glove with Islam, enjoying the benefits of western achievements, and exchanging its cultural dimension.

It is also worth pointing out that the military is also part of Turkish culture and politics. It has intervened before in the political process of the country, and has been indicating its readiness to be involved once again, if the politicians of the country do not change the course of their actions.

The Turkish army has been made the guardian of Kemalism, in essence, and since it is part of culture and politics, maybe, and the indications testify to that, one day it can become the guardian of the nation?

## The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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Letters to the editor: Will be edited for brevity, must contain name and address of sender.

### Business scene

#### Foreign Exchange

	Buy	Sell
US\$	0.7080	0.7190
£	1.1510	1.1565
DM	0.4124	0.4145
Sfr	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
ITL	0.2624	0.2652
YEN	0.3667	0.3695
LYD	0.0419	0.0421

#### SATURDAY

Volume	166.5
Value	13854
Volume	3904
Value	24849

كانا من الاشغال



JULY 1997  
Middle East Beat  
by  
Iri Janbek  
Turkish  
Identity

3 JULY 1997

B U S I N E S S

THE STAR 5

**Business scene**

■ The ceiling for foreign investors equity in economic projects in Jordan has been raised to 70%. Some say it could reach a 100% in certain economic sectors. The previous ceiling was 50%.

Among investment sectors involved in the 100% increase are land and air transport, banks, insurance, communication, agricultural supplies and buying stocks at Amman Financial Market.

However, foreign equity in trade, services, mining, construction, and contracting should not exceed 50 percent.

■ The Bahrain-based United Gulf Bank, has bought JD 2 million shares in the Jordan-Kuwait Bank. Its size of equity in the bank is 20 percent. The non-Jordanian overall share in the Bank's capital is now 49%. The Jordan-Kuwait Bank is to offer 5.5 million shares for general and private subscription to meet the instructions of the Central Bank of Jordan to local banks to increase their capital to JD 20 million by the end of this year.

■ The Anadarcio Oil Company and the National Petroleum Co. signed an oil exploration agreement, according to which the former carries out oil excavation and drilling operations in Safawi, north-east Jordan.

Over the first two years and a half of the explorations contract, Anadarcio is committed to invest about \$5 million. If the contract term is extended, the costs of the drilling and exploration operations are expected to reach as high as \$20 million over an eight-year period.

■ The Salt-based Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Co. has been awarded the ISO 9001 certification. It is the first Jordanian pharmaceutical company to be given such accreditation.

■ Palestinian expatriate businessmen from different parts of the world, America, Europe, Australia and the Arab world are expected to participate in the first conference of "Palestinian Businessmen", which will convene on 21 - 24, July in Gaza and Bethlehem cities.

**Foreign Exchange**  
Wednesday, 2 July

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SEF	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEL	0.3667	0.3685
LIT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

# Bankers are upbeat about CBJ measures to remove restrictions on capital

AMMAN (Star)—Aiming to attract foreign investments and liberalize foreign currency dealings, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) is to remove all restrictions on foreign currency in Jordan. This provides for a free movement in the capital market and paves the way for greater international openness.

The CBJ is now able to handle visible and invisible payments (including capital payments) without restrictions. The dinar, foreign currency and gold are now freely

exchanged inside and outside the country.

This cancels the CBJ's prior approval as individuals, and companies are today free to deposit their capital in local banks or outside.

Also, residents have the right to a bank account in foreign currency without a limited ceiling to withdraw.

The new instructions allow banks to finance the value of imported cargo from the free zones or on transit, and have the option to offer clients all related credit facilities to

secure finance for the cargo.

The latest measures adopted by the CBJ are being welcomed by the banking and trade sectors in Jordan.

Union Bank's Vice Chairman Esam Al Salfeti, described this step as reflecting confidence in the Jordanian dinar and enhances its value. Moreover, he said, it provides much support to the investment climate in Jordan.

Minister of Transport Dr Bassam Al Saket stresses that this measure will help boost the volume of foreign investments in the Kingdom.

Jordan-Kuwait Bank Chairman Sufyan Al Sarawi, said the CBJ measure reflects its wise strategy to help establish confidence of people in the economy and refutes rumors of the devaluation of the Jordanian dinar.

"This is a bold step that strengthens confidence in the stability of the dinar and enhances trust in the economic situation of the country as a result of the maintaining of high foreign currency reserves," said executive director of the Arab Bank Mifteh Agel.

While some experts argue that Jordanian businessmen may be encouraged to transfer their investments or launch new ones outside Jordan, Agel says there is no risk of this and stresses that this should not raise fears.

Jordanian capital is in fact slowly filtering back to Jordan and remittances of Jordanian expatriates are increasing.

Ziyad Al Basha, securities department director at the British Bank said that the CBJ's measures are a signal of the healthy position of the Jordanian dinar and considered them as fruits of the World Bank/IMF economic adjustment program.

Al Basha stressed that the banks have to attract skills and create new administrative systems to be able to offer new banking services to clients.

The CBJ's latest measures were also applauded by the Chairman of the Jordanian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Haidar Murad, who said that they will increase foreign investors' confidence in Jordan as long as they enjoy full freedom to

exchange their capital without restrictions or limits.

This is not all. The liberalization of dealing in local and foreign currencies is seen by the prominent banker Hani Al Saudi as a rational decision that activates external trade, simplifies export and import operations and reduces their costs.

As for money exchangers, this decision will have a positive effect. They will not be obliged any more to take a prior approval from the Central Bank in dealing with financial remittances.

However, Al Saudi said that this decision comes 25 years late as it should have been adopted between 1975-1990. He argues that if it had been taken, the economic recession would not have existed.

He called on the Ministry of Finance to cancel the fees on importing gold and the Central Bank to remove monetary restrictions, especially those related to curtailing interest rates and bank commissions on loans and remittances. ■

## Medpartenariat Jordan '97 to be held at RCC

A 150 local companies are holding the Medpartenariat Jordan '97 meeting between 13-14 July at the Royal Cultural Center in Amman. Companies from the European Union and Medpartenariat countries will also be present. This is a great opportunity for enterprises in the EU to join forces with their Jordanian counterparts and thereby establish their presence in this increasingly important region of the world. To participate in the meeting an application form should be submitted to Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centers Corporation (JEDCO) in Amman. ■

# Al Naouri group becomes member of the ISO 9002 club

THE INTEREST of the industrial sector in Jordan in the last few years focused on improving its quality to cope with worldwide requirements. The ISO 9000 is the *par excellence* for international companies for it means high quality and specifications.

But that's not all. The certification has been enlarged to include companies in the service sector in Jordan. The number of local firms getting the ISO 9002 certification is growing day by day. This is seen as a positive trend which reinforces clients' confidence in the products and services of such companies.

Al Naouri Group (NG), in addition to other two sister companies, the Ammon Shipping and Transport Co. (AST) and the Salam Shipping and Forwarding Co. (SSF) have been awarded the ISO 9002 certificate last week.

"Though it is something relatively difficult to apply the ISO 9002 to the shipping industry, we managed to improve our performance and enhance our services and be strong enough to get this certificate," Mr Ibrahim Nouri, the Group Chairman told *The Star*.

The three companies provide multi-transport services distinguished with high competence and quality that competes with foreign companies

worldwide. Ammon, through its worldwide expertise, specializes in marine transport and is considered one of the biggest companies in container shipments.

The company functions as an agent for the biggest shipping line in the world

"The Evergreen Marine Corporation (EMC). It is also agent for Eva Air. Al Naouri commented, "The EMC line has been active docking at Aqaba port since 1994 to link the country with other ports of the world."

As a matter of fact, NG, AST and SSF are considered pioneers in this field of industry to be awarded the ISO 9002 certificate.

This is of course in acknowledgement of their high quality management system. Referring to the impact of the ISO 9002 certification on the transport and shipping industry, Mr Al Naouri elaborated that the acquiring of this certificate boosts the confidence of the international markets in the performance of our local companies.

In addition, he continued "it increases the confidence of the trade sector in our performance and accredited services, and also this naturally boosts trust in the staff involved in such performance."



On the whole, accreditation gives more quality assurance and reflects the bright face of Jordan in international markets. Mr Naouri expressed how proud he was that his three companies became ISO 9002 certified in such a short time, and he thanked Mr Samer Khubeis of the Philadelphia Consulting Group for supervising the three companies program to prepare and train the staff on ISO 9002 requirements and specifications, right from the beginning.

On behalf of the assessing authority, SGS Yrles, UK which is authorized to grant ISO 9000 certification, Mr Esam Al Biheiri was impressed with the efficiency and the high standard of the quality system implemented within the three companies (NG, AST and SSF).

Al Naouri described the accreditation of the ISO 9002 certificate to be an award from the Ministry of Transport, the Ports Authority and the Trade and industry sectors in Jordan. He called on other companies running transport and shipping business to do much

efforts to become ISO 9000 certified, enhance their productivity and performance, and thus meet global challenges. ■

## Al Nahas Tours continues to provide links with new "Star Alliance"

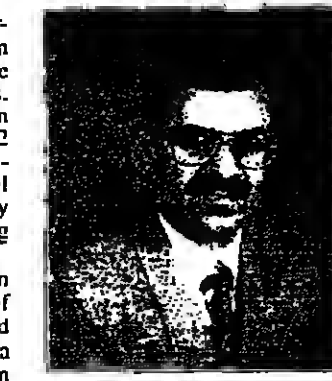
THROUGH CO-OPERATION with the Iranian Embassy in Amman and the Iranian Airlines in Damascus, Nahas Tours organized an educational trip to Iran on 2 to 9 May. This included a delegation of directors of travel and tours agencies headed by the Nahas Tours managing director, Mohammed Hijazi.

Nahas Tours was also given an award by the Minister of Tourism when it organized the first acroplane with extra flights from Japan to Amman in 1992. This acroplane was carrying 226 Japanese tourists who visited Jordan and Syria.

Nahas Tours operates as agents for the Canadian, Japanese and Iran Airlines.

Canadian Airlines have signed an agreement with Royal Jordanian to allocate 40 seats on RJ aeroplanes for Montreal and Toronto.

On the international level, Canadian Airlines have entered the five-members international alliance for airlines "Star Alliance". This alliance - comprises United Airlines (American), Luf-



Hijazi

thansa (German), SAS (Scandinavian Airlines System), Air Canada and Thai Airways International (Thailand Air).

The five "Star Alliance" each have extensive domestic and international route networks. Together they create "The Airlines network for earth", with more than 210,000 employees and flights to 578 cities in 106



countries. The star Alliance "brand" provides a mark of quality and benefits, including worldwide recognition, that will become readily identifiable to customers. The brand name will complement - but not replace - each airline's individual identity and product offerings in home markets and around the world.

Total sales of this Alliance are expected to hit \$42.3 billion annually as it is scheduled to carry more than 174 million passengers per year, through 6233 departure flights in all world airports.

## MARKET WATCH 28 June - 1 July

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
<p>▲ Aladdin Industries 4.77</p> <p>▲ Arab Financial Investment 6.00</p> <p>▲ Universal Chemical Industry 5.26</p> <p>▲ Jordan Kuwait Bank 5.02</p>	<p>▲ Aladdin Industries 5.01</p> <p>▲ El-Zay Ready Wear 4.14</p> <p>▲ Housing Bank 3.49</p> <p>▲ Kuwait Bank 5.04</p> <p>▲ Jordan Gulf Insurance 4.98</p> <p>▲ JIMCO 3.85</p>	<p>▲ Gulf Insurance 5.24</p> <p>▲ Arab Insurance 5.15</p> <p>▲ Al Naour Insurance 5.09</p> <p>▲ Middle East Hotels 5.22</p> <p>▲ Universal Industries 4.72</p> <p>▲ Jordan Kuwait Bank 4.51</p>	<p>▲ Arab Insurance 4.90</p> <p>▲ JIMCO 4.17</p> <p>▲ United Engineering 2.78</p> <p>▲ Kuwait Bank 5.00</p> <p>▲ United Land Development 4.23</p> <p>▲ Kavar Insurance 4.72</p>
General Price Pointer 160.820	159.570	158.660	159.540
Trade Volume 1385467	3148773	3811467	1493005
Stock Volume 390634	1076179	1285169	683461
Highest Traded Stocks	<p>▲ Kavar Bank 2014728</p> <p>▲ Development Bank 1247175</p> <p>▲ Arab Pharm 66468</p>		

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**Jordan Petroleum Refinery**  
Company Tender 3/97  
Fuel Oil and Naphtha Additional Storage Tanks Project

Extension of Prequalification Documents Submission Date

Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company Announces the extension of prequalification documents submission date to become on 28/6/1997 instead of 25/6/1997.



# Algerian rulers believe conflict on the ebb

By John Daniszewski

HAOUACHE FANER, Algeria—Fifteen-year-old Ahmed Sahali stood in the ruins of this hamlet, a faraway look on his face, as though he could still hear the murderous rampage.

Three weeks earlier, he had been asleep when 40 armed Islamic militants slipped down from the mountains, across the ripened wheat fields and through the orange groves to raid the 12 brick farmhouses that were Ahmed's world.

For 30 minutes, while Ahmed huddled in a hole beneath the floorboards of his house in horror, he listened to gunfire, explosions and the shrieks of his neighbors before their throats were slit. In the short time it took the civil militia to arrive, 34 people in Haouache Faner had been slaughtered. An 80-year-old man and a young mother, her throat slashed and still clutching her slain 4-month-old, were among those slain by the Islamic militants.

"Not a single government in the world would tolerate these people," said Ahmed's father, Mohammed Sahali, who managed to protect his family through judicious use of an old double-barreled shotgun. "They hide out like rats," he said of the militants, nodding toward the cedar-covered mountains in the distance. "They are rats."

The barbarity of the war between Algeria's government forces and Islamic extremists has shocked the world. Massacres of villages, death squads, car bombings and mass arrests have turned the country into a place of near-mythic terror.

And yet with increasing confidence, authorities here believe that, through a combination of military might and moderate reform, Algeria has turned the corner.

Last month for the third time in three years—national elections have been held in relative peace, as the military-backed government of President Liamine Zeroul meted out a new democratic system. And while the country is permeated with fear, many people lead seemingly normal lives—going to the beach, attending parties and pursuing

professions and studies with fatalistic determination.

No journalists have been killed in six months—progress in a country where 67 were slain in the past five years. Government spokespeople now wax optimistic about a return of foreign investment and a revival of tourism—brave talk in a land where foreigners are targeted for death and more than 100 have been slain since 1992.

While others were writing the government off, seeing it going the way of the late Iranian shah's regime, Algeria's rulers showed themselves ruthlessly willing to use their 100,000-member army, ample gendarmerie and other means at the disposal of an authoritarian state to keep the Islamists at bay.

At least 60,000 of Algeria's 28.6 million people have died in more than five years of conflict. The killings have been blamed for the most part on the armed Islamic group and other Islamic offshoots, whose targets have included working women, unveiled women, government employees, journalists, academicians, Roman Catholic clerics and even Islamic theologians who did not meet their fundamentalist criteria.

But the government response has been fierce. It has been criticized by international human rights groups for alleged torture and extrajudicial murders, and censured for acts such as the killing of 99 inmates of Algiers' Serkadji prison two years ago in what authorities explained as an attempted escape.

Newspapers hostile to the government are often closed, or find that printers are no longer willing to accept their business. Thousands of people under suspicion of links to the militants have been arrested. Others have simply disappeared.

But the regime's policy of "eradication"—short-hand for wiping out the violent Islamic threat—has been implemented simultaneously with cautious democratic reforms.

In 1995, the country got its first elected president; in 1996, a popularly endorsed amended constitution; and in June, its first multiparty Parliament, with moderate Islamists and other opposition parties taking

over 40 percent of the seats.

Between the regime's use of the iron fist, its halting steps toward democracy and the widening perception that extremist Islamic factions have been wallowing in mindless violence, support for the Islamists has ebbed and the government has bought itself time to improve living conditions and restore stability, some Western diplomats believe. "Repression works," one diplomat commented wryly—at least in the short term.

Falling fortunes for the Islamist resistance do not necessarily translate into support for the government. The real story in Algeria may be the emergence of a centrist mood that rejects the violent tactics of both sides and urges a new national dialogue that includes the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front, whose anticipated electoral victory in 1992 caused the government to cancel elections, triggering the current violence.

Eight of the nine opposition parties elected to Parliament in June support negotiations over force to solve the country's crisis, and the imperative to restore peace appears to have been uppermost on the minds of the voters.

Whether the country succeeds in defeating violence and restoring stability has ramifications beyond Algeria itself.

"To think of Algeria as a problem only on the far side of the Mediterranean is fairly shortsighted," and not just because of the gas and oil it produces, one Western diplomat said.

Senior government officials defend the decision to half the Islamist takeover in 1992, likening the use of the ballot box by the Islamic Salvation Front to Hitler's rise to power in Germany. If the Islamists had not been stopped, the argument goes, Algeria would have lost its only chance at democracy and been turned into a theocratic autocracy.

"On behalf of democracy, their aim was to kill democracy," said Lahcen Moussaoui, a secretary of state in the Foreign Ministry.

He said he feels that the government has been vindicated in its choices, and he por-

trayed the militants as isolated because their violence against civilians has boomeranged, estranging them from the people. Violence will continue for some time, he said, but in the long run the violent extremists will be defeated. "The population is not following them; even more, the population is fighting against the terrorism," Moussaoui declared. "Whole villages have been killed—old ladies and children. How can anybody be with them?"

But others suggest it is all shadows within shadows. No one really knows who is doing what to whom, and why.

"You cannot make a judgment," said one journalist wearing an Islamic head-covering. Her husband, also a journalist, was assassinated in 1994, leaving her to bring up their child. "If someone asked me today who killed Omar, I would have to say I don't know," she said quietly.

Sympathizers of the Islamic Salvation Front insinuate that much of the violence attributed to Islamists is committed by government forces. "Killers are numerous and everywhere," said a lawyer who represents one of the most prominent Islamists. "All Algerians, without exception, live with fear."

But you might not think it to see young people on the beach in Moretti, about half an hour's drive west of Algiers. In Moretti, where the blue waves lap against white beaches lined with tiny tourist bungalows and pizzerias, you might forget there is a conflict, or even that you are in the Middle East.

Mixed groups of sun-honored teenagers in scant hugging suits cavort on the sand, and couples kiss and hold each other. The scene would not be out of place in Europe or California but would constitute a scandal, and even grounds for arrest, in many Islamic countries.

Algeria's puritanical extremist leaders would not doubt be appalled, which may explain why bombs have exploded recently on the street outside of several cafes nearby. Roads leading to the beaches are controlled with concrete barricades and military checkpoints, but the youths seem to delight that they have salvaged this bit



Will massacres stop in Algeria after the parliamentary elections?

of fun from an otherwise grim Algerian reality.

"We go to the beach. We swim. We have parties. Everybody enjoys themselves," Wassila, a 17-year-old high school junior, breezily explained.

But some things have changed. For two years, Wassila said, her family kept her indoors because they lived in Baraki, an area near Algiers that was "hot" with Islamists. Then last year, they had to move.

It happened this way, she said: In November, a nice-looking young man from their neighborhood knocked at the door and politely asked to see Wassila's father, a mechanical engineer. Once inside, the young man took out a pistol and showed it to the older man. He issued a warning: Wassila's father should refrain from smoking and Wassila and her sisters should start covering their hair, according

to the Koran. Faced with the threat, her father decided they should leave. They departed before dawn the next morning, and have settled in Ben-Aknoun, a relatively safe suburb in Algiers that is firmly in the government's control.

The young beachgoers are relieved that the Islamists so far have been blocked. "If there was an Islamic state here, I would kill myself," said Elias, a young man in sunglasses.

To which Elira, one of a clutch of teenage girls standing nearby, chimed in reassuringly: "Never, ever would we have an Islamic state," she said. "Someone will always stop them."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## US administration foggy about Gulf War toxic cloud exposure

By Patrick J. Sloyan

WASHINGTON—One year after heliately admitting that US Army troops exposed 14 tons of sarin nerve gas during the Gulf War, the Clinton administration still doesn't know if 20,000 or 200,000 troops were exposed to a toxic cloud that wafted over the Iraqi battlefield.

Senior Pentagon officials, however, hope to have some answers this month that may give a new perspective to an array of illnesses affecting more than 100,000 men and women who served in the 1991 conflict. Even low-level exposure to nerve gas may have contributed to the illnesses that began to show up almost two years after the war, according to Pentagon researchers.

"We're going to deliver as promised on July 21," said Bernard Rostker, an assistant Navy secretary who is the Defense Department's point man on an issue that has tarnished Pentagon's credibility.

Rostker has been accused of obstructing the investigation of the nerve gas exposures by the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses. In Congress there have been bipartisan allegations of a Pentagon cover-up.

In July, Rostker plans to make public a long-delayed computer analysis of a poison cloud created by an explosion set off by US Army engineers near the sprawling ammunition complex at Khamsiyah in southern Iraq. There were two distinct demolition operations:

—On March 4, a week after the ground war ended, 9.2 tons of liquid nerve gas contained in 1,060 warheads of 122 mm rockets went up.

According to the CIA, the plume from that blast drifted northeast, away from 1,100 soldiers involved in the destruction. Most of the liquid chemical was contained inside concrete bunkers that were collapsed by the explosion, the CIA reported. On that day, US soldiers destroyed 33 other bunkers filled with Iraqi explosives.

—On March 10, 4.8 tons of sarin was destroyed outside the Khamsiyah bunker complex known as "the pit." About 550 rockets inside wooden crates stacked in the open were exploded, sending the nerve gas into the atmosphere.

Most of the controversy centers on the March 10 event, the



distance the plume traveled and the amount of sarin carried aloft and eventually deposited on persons on the ground.

According to the CIA and the Institute for Defense Analysis, that plume drifted 165 miles due south, where more than 200,000 American soldiers were deployed along with British and Arab forces. Their analysis was presented to the White House panel on March 18 to hearings in Salt Lake City without reference to the deployment of 325,000 allied ground troops on the southern Iraqi battlefield.

The official US Army history of the conflict shows only imprecise locations of larger units beneath the track of the CIA plume, such as the 1st Armored, the 3rd Armored, parts of the 1st Mechanized Infantry and the 1st Cavalry Divisions. Also in the area was the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Just east of the CIA plume are the 2nd US Marine and the British 1st Armored Divisions. Uncharted, however, are thousands of soldiers in VII and XVIII Corps support units that were also on the battlefield.

"We still don't know exactly where all the troops were on March 10," said retired Army Lt. Gen. Dale Vesser, one of Rostker's investigators. In an interim report June 26, the Pentagon for the first time pinpointed the locations of 13,000 troops from the 82nd Airborne and 24th Mechanized Infantry Divisions, two units to XVIII

Corps. Last year the Pentagon estimated at least 20,800 from those units were within 32 miles of Khamsiyah on March 10. But Vesser said in a recent interview that he still needs to account for 50,000 support troops who were also near the pit explosion.

Far more than 200,000 may have been exposed to the cloud, which would have reached Saudi Arabia and the major allied staging area of Haifa at Beirut, according to the CIA model.

The reach of the poison plume is based on weather prevailing at different altitudes and the amount of sarin released into the atmosphere. The CIA model is based on the destruction of 550 rockets, of which only 260 were actually blown to smithereens. Those 260 rockets contained 4,420 pounds of sarin.

Once it is vaporized by an explosion, the poison gas can remain airborne for 72 hours, dropping on persons below when there are changes in sunlight and temperatures.

The model developed by the CIA and refined by the Pentagon because of uncertainties over the amount of nerve gas released March 10. "There's too much uncertainty to go around scaring people," Rostker said in March during a combative session with his critics on the White House panel.

In an interview, Rostker

offered details of an elaborate effort to get a more accurate account of the March 10 plume. From the US Army Rostker obtained demolition experts who participated in the Khamsiyah operations. Soil samples were taken at Khamsiyah, and identical sand and dirt were imported from the Gulf desert to Utah.

At the Dugway Proving Ground in Utah, the Army rigged the 122 mm rockets with plastic explosives just as US engineers did at the pit, said Army Col. Larry Cerghino. A pound and a quarter of C-4 explosive was tied with an explosive cord to wooden crates holding the rockets.

While many of the rocket warheads—tubes made from plastic—were broken open by the explosion, only about 50 of the rockets were actually vaporized by the Dugway experiments, Rostker said. And much of the liquid used to simulate nerve gas at the test site was contained by the wooden crates.

As a result, Rostker's conclusions could involve far less nerve gas in the atmosphere than earlier CIA models. He is still uncertain how far the plume traveled and how many troops may have been exposed.

"That will be up to the CIA analysts to decide," said Rostker, who will be turning over his research to the spy agency.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## New Palestinian generation feels legacy of Israeli rule

By Nicholas Goldberg

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—Just hours after his arrest by the Palestinian secret police last year, Ghazi Hamad was led blindfolded and handcuffed into a little room in the heart of the Gaza Central Prison.

His interrogation took place over several days, during which, he says, he was beaten repeatedly. For more than three days, he was not allowed to sleep, and when he wasn't being beaten, he was often left bound and hunched in a chair in a narrow hallway, assaulted by blaring rock-and-roll music and the screams of men being beaten in nearby cells.

It was while he was in the corridor that a strange and disquieting notion came to him, a Middle Eastern *djinn* vu.

"I realized that my own people were doing to me exactly what the Israelis had done," said Hamad, who spent five years in Israeli prisons during the early 1990s for his role as a leader of the militant Hamas organization. "The rock-and-roll and sleep deprivation, the chair, even leaving me out in the corridor to hear the screams. I was stunned, but then I remembered that almost all of them had spent time in Israeli jails, and this, I guess, is what they learned there."

The irony was obvious to Hamad, though somewhat frightening: Three decades after the Israelis captured the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinians had spent so much time in Israeli jails that they had adopted the methods of their captors, as naturally and easily as they had learned to speak Hebrew in the prison yard. It was a legacy of Israeli rule that would be passed on to the next generation of Palestinians.

Today, even as the hold of the Israelis over the territories is starting to loosen and the Palestinians are beginning to wrestle with what kind of society they will create in the vacuum, legacies like these—not just interrogation techniques, but the accumulated economic, social, psychological and cultural baggage of 30 years of occupation—are shaping the Palestinian future.

"You'd be amazed at what the occupation has done to us as a people," said Salah Tamari, a longtime PLO military official from Bethlehem who is now a member of the Palestinian legislative council. "It's like a plant growing in a distorted environment: Our natural growth was altered, our normal life was disrupted. I think it will take a very long time before we even begin to understand just how significant and damaging the effect has been."

The occupation dates back 30 years this week to the Six Day War in June 1967, when Israel, threatened from all sides, marched into the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, annexing 3,600 square miles of territory and more than a million Palestinian enemies of the state. Arguing that they needed to hold the territory as a strategic

huffer zone against Palestinian terrorists and hostile Arab neighbors, the Israelis took control of all facets of day-to-day life, from the mundane bureaucratic tasks of issuing drivers licenses, housing permits and travel documents to the deployment of the police, prisons and army battalions that have been the foundation of their power in the territories ever since.

Today, about 75 percent of the 2.5 million residents of the West Bank and Gaza are under 30, meaning they have never known life without Israeli army checkpoints, Hebrew-language signs and hostile bureaucrats. About 400,000 Palestinians have been arrested and jailed by the Israelis since 1967, according to Palestinian estimates, tens of thousands have been wounded by rubber bullets, and more than 1,300 Palestinians have died during runs with Israeli security forces in the territories since they began in 1989, according



to the Israeli human-rights group B'Tselem.

Families have been scattered throughout the region and the world. A study several years ago by the Gaza Community Mental Health Clinic indicated that 90 percent of Palestinian children age 8 to 14 had been teargassed, either at home or at school or on the street. Yet in an indication of how intertwined the two societies have become, one out of four Palestinian workers crosses into Israel each day when the borders are open, according to United Nations figures. Probably 50 percent of Palestinian men speak fluent Hebrew. For better or worse, the Palestinian and Israeli economies have grown deeply interdependent.

"Life under the Israelis has been an experience that has transformed us," said Khaled, a 28-year-old unemployed man in the West Bank village of Surif.

Many Israelis defend the tough measures of the occupation as necessary, given the existence of such implacable enemies so close to home. No one wanted Israel to become the kind of country that metes out collective punishment and demolishes people's homes and shoots tear gas at children, they say, but it happened in an escalation of violence. "Neither their teaching nor their experience has ever accustomed the Jewish people to exult in conquest,"

said 'Army Chief' of Staff Yitzhak Rabin two weeks after the Six Day War was concluded, and in the years that followed, the Israelis were to become even more familiar with what Hebrew University professor Yaron Ezrahi has called the many "moral ambiguities and ideological contradictions" that are "the realities of conquest."

Today, while negotiations condone fitfully over the future of the West Bank and Gaza, the occupation goes on. For Khaled, in Surif, a hilly town of 15,000 not far from the green line separating Israel from the West Bank, the past few months have been little different from years past. After the bombing of a Tel Aviv cafe that killed three Israelis in March, Israeli forces said they discovered a Hamas cell operating out of the village and issued orders that residents could not go outside of their houses even during the day and could not leave the village except under extraordinary circumstances. (Brief inter-ludes were finally granted to permit shopping for food.) Palestinians called the two-month curfew "collective punishment" of the innocent, but Israelis said such tough measures were necessary to fight terrorism.

The result was severe dislocation and occasional tragedy. Many people lost their jobs. A pregnant woman lost her baby when she couldn't get to the hospital in time after going into labor. The Israelis demolished three houses belonging to the families of the suspected Hamas terrorists, saying such demolitions, although hard on survivors, are among the most effective ways to deter future bombings.

Today, four years after the Oslo, Norway, peace process began, it has become difficult to gauge whether the occupation is actually ending. Under Prime Minister Rabin and Shimon Peres, Israeli troops withdrew from most of Gaza and from the major cities of the West Bank. Since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was elected, the Israelis have also withdrawn from parts of Hebron. Most Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza now live for the first time under at least partial self-rule.

But the peace process is stalled and the occupation only half dismantled. Israel retains security control over 97 percent of the territory on the West Bank and civilian administrative control over 70 percent. Israeli jeeps still patrol the villages and olive fields, and Israeli checkpoints dot the roads. The Palestinian-controlled area is divided into small islands of non-contiguous territory. Border closures continue, keeping tens of thousands of Palestinian workers from their jobs in Israel and barring Gaza students from their universities in the West Bank. Furthermore, more than 150,000 Jewish settlers still live in the territories.

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JULY 1997

Disn d

By John Daniszewski

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# Disney's money machine doesn't slow down

By Rob Hjaasen

IN GREEK mythology, Zeus was king of the gods, Apollo was god of the sun, and Disneyocles was god of entertainment.

Every year, Disneyocles would descend Mount Olympus bearing gifts of high art—usually on VHS tape. The ancient roads to the Acropolis would be closed for the parades marking each release. Gifts from Disneyocles would be discounted with any drive-through purchase at Olive King. And the god of entertainment (and his stockholders) said this was good.

One day, during a break in the Peloponnesian Wars, Hercules was at his health club doing 20 sets of ab crunches. when Disneyocles descended upon him.

"Hey, get off me! What's your problem, pal?" Hercules said.

But Disneyocles said unto Hercules: "You should be in the movies." And so it was.

Disneyocles divined that "Hercules" should be rolled out to mortals on a summer's Friday, before the change of moons but definitely after the Spartans had released "The Lost World."

Thus, the stage was set for Disneyocles' 35th animated classic. And summoning his herculean marketing strength, the god of entertainment declared "Hercules" (and its promotional tie-ins) would slay the "Lion King," "The Little Mermaid" and the disappointing "Hunchback."

And the mortals checked their wallets in anticipation.

It's no myth, Disney's "Hercules" opens this Friday in every nook and cranny in the US. The \$70 million, 86-minute movie is critically acclaimed—possibly a "comeback" movie for Disney, as ridiculous as that sounds. "Hunchback of Notre Dame" grossed only \$100 million in the United States, compared to Disney's "The Lion King" (\$312.8 million) and "Aladdin" (\$217 million).

But parents don't need the newspaper to tell them Disney is out of the gate again. Their children informed them of the release date.

Everyone can follow along: "Hercules" is in the theaters, meaning "Hunchback" has been out on video, meaning McDonald's will offer "Hercules" toys with kiddie meals, meaning Burger King still might have a few "Hunchback" toys lying around; meaning, as we speak, Disney animators are a third into the next Disney movie.

This can only mean "Hercules" will be promoted at Disney's theme parks, on Disney's Daily Blast (its subscription Internet service), the Disney Channel, Disney Stores, ESPN and ABC, also owned by Disney. Baseball's Anaheim Angels and hockey's Mighty Ducks might soon trade their uniforms for "Hercules" style tunics.

It's the circle of Disney. And, once again, we are surrounded and at Mickey's merry mercy.

"Disney has become a nation-state," says Henry Giroux at Pennsylvania State University. Social commentator and student of pop culture, Giroux has analyzed Disney movies and reported nationally on what he



calls the "Disneyfication" of America.

Disney movies are not just entertainment. "It's the same message: consumerism. It's not simply about childhood innocence, it's about the commercializing of children," Giroux argues. Ironically, "what we see in these movies is the disappearance of childhood."

Giroux is not the first college professor (nor the last) to criticize Disney for what he calls its 1950-ish portrayals of minorities and women. In real life, Southern Baptists are boycotting Disney for "Gay Days" at its theme parks, offering health benefits to partners of gay employees, and for signing off on the outing of TV's "Ellen" on ABC. But in Disney movies, the old stereotypes are alive and well and beautifully animated, Giroux says.

Why does Scar, the scheming lion in "The Lion King," have a British accent, while the marauding hyenas sound like working-class blacks? Giroux asks. Who could blame Arab-Americans for criticizing "Aladdin" for its depiction of Arabs as thieves, unshaven busters?

Seen any blacks portrayed in Disney films? One presumably gay character—Gov. Ratcliffe's assistant in "Pocahontas"—is a cowardly, sniveling florist. And the women in Disney movies ... don't get the Pean State man started.

"Have you seen the trailer for 'Hercules'? The woman looks anorexic!" Giroux says. "It's the Disneyfication of heroin chic!" One Disney, one world view. "Disney undermines the notion of cultural democracy by creating a cultural monoculture."

At Buena Vista Home Video in

Burbank, Calif., callers on hold listen to Michael Bolton whaling a tune from "Hercules." Marketing vice president Tania Moloney then picks up. She says Disney does not have a monopoly on what children watch. "Families have many, many choices of what they want their children exposed to."

And people can choose not to buy each and every video. Her kids, she says, are perfectly happy just to watch "Lion King" and "Pocahontas" over and over again. As Moloney says, Disney movies "have great repeatability."

Giroux's kids, by the way, also love "The Lion King." Over and over again.

Ah, the old days—in the time before Disney World, EPCOT, Happy Meals, Euro Disney, Michael Eisner, "Beauty and the Beast" on Broadway, Robin Williams' Genie and "Toy Story." Sure, Mickey had been a cash mouse, so to speak, for generations, but surely there was a time when kids could experience Disney fun without such relentless multi-level promotions.

In the 1960s, for instance, they had "Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color," with the man himself introducing the 7:30 p.m. Sunday telecasts. Tinkerbell splashed wonderful colors on our TV screens as the whole family watched "Salty, the Hijacked Seal," "Stub, Best Cow Dog in the West" or "Lefty, the Ding-a-Ling Linx." Not a gargoyles or magic carpet in the bunch ... or a memorable scene.

Remember when it was a huge deal to see a movie in a theater? Some kids asked their parents to take them to see "Mary Poppins" twice. Julie Andrews floating down with

her umbrella. Spoonful of sugar, etc. Now, of course, kids have seen "Beauty and the Beast" dozens of times.

Back to Walt. In those 1960s shows, viewers caught glimpses of Disney's sole theme park—Disneyland in California. A whole place of just Disney characters and rides! Mickey Mouse loping around and hugging kids! And an E ticket got you into the Haunted Mansion.

Disneyland hegt Florida's Disney World in 1971, and the other side of America descended on Disney's latest commercial baby, Disney World begot EPCOT, movie theme parks, more resorts. Celebration—the new utopian Disney community—and, coming in 1998, Disney's Animal Kingdom, which will feature, get this, real animals.

"It's hard to see the end in sight," says history professor Steven Watts at the University of Missouri. "I half-way expect Disney to form a political party."

Watts has made a career out of studying Disney's effect on American culture. His "The Magic Kingdom: The American Way of Life" (Houghton-Mifflin), is due out in November. Watts has mixed feelings about Disney's success. He admires the studio's output and the "pretty good stuff" in its recent movies. But he can't help but point out that a place like Disney World used to be separate from society, a "magical" place to go to escape reality.

There is no separation now, he says. "It's become Disney World in the real generic sense of the language."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## Tough guy Mitchum always insisted that he was never a star

ONE OF Hollywood's best known tough guy stars has died. Robert Mitchum, who had been suffering from cancer and emphysema, died in his sleep at his home near Santa Barbara, California. Robert Mitchum was known as a so-called "man's man" type of actor. He often played blunt-spoken, strong-willed men in his films, but he was also capable of doing comedy, and once even appeared in a musical.

The film that first brought him fame was "The story of G-I Joe" in 1945. He later gained praise for his work in such films as "The sun-downers," "cape fear," and "Ryan's daughter."

Mr Mitchum often told stories of his hard life before Hollywood.

He said he had been a prize fighter for a time, and that the scars from this had added to his tough look. he also had a reputation of being tough on directors.

Robert Mitchum is said to have died in his sleep, after months of suffering from emphysema and lung cancer. he was 79.

Robert Mitchum always insisted that he was not a star. he preferred to be known as a working actor.

"It is a job. I have said it before and I repeat it, one of the greatest movie stars that ever lived was rin lin tin, and that was a mother (female) dog, so there can't be too much of a trick to it."

But his fans and many movie critics disagreed. He was a star, whether he liked it or not. he played a wide range of characters in the more than 100 films he made during his 50 year career. He was still working even as cancer spread through his lungs within the past year. he will be featured in two films that are yet to be released.

The film role that first brought him stardom was "the story of G-I Joe" in 1945,

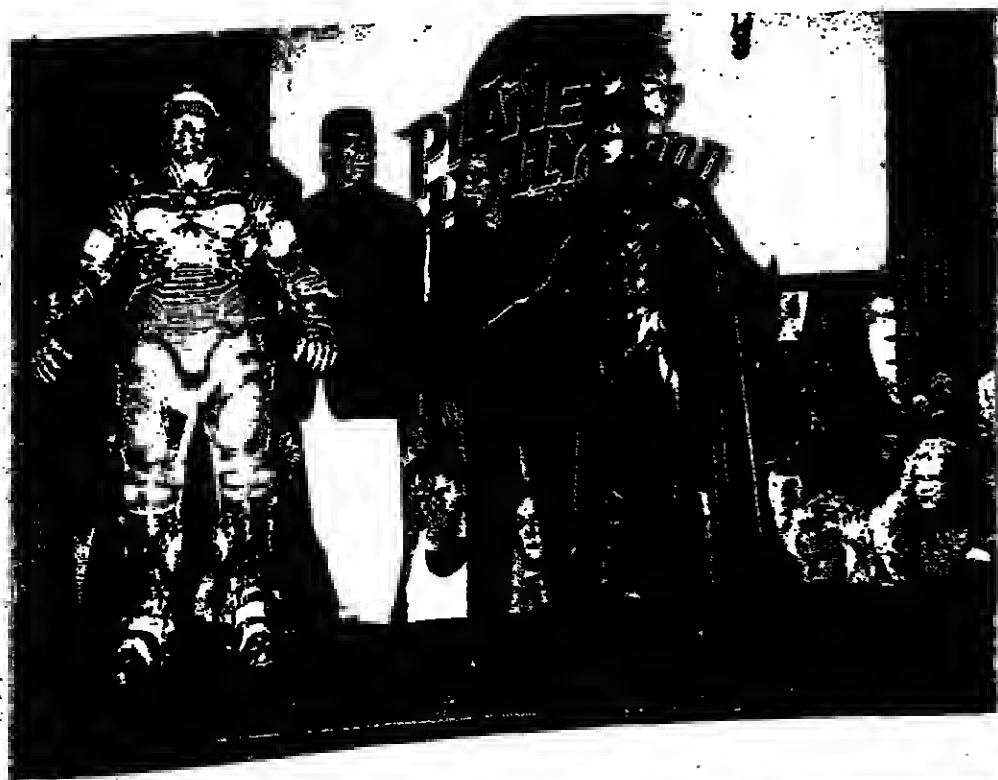
which gained him his one and only academy award nomination."

Other notable films in which he appeared include "River of no return," with Marilyn Monroe; "cape fear," and "Ryan's daughter."

Robert Mitchum like to talk about his rough life before he came to Hollywood, he claimed to have once escaped from a chain gang, and said that what he called his "ugly face" was the result of a short career as a prize fighter. he was also known for his fights with directors, and was sometimes called "difficult to work with."

Robert Mitchum was the son of a Scotch-Irish father and a blackfoot (American) Indian mother, but he mostly played standard cowboy roles in such films as "The Way West" and "El Dorado."

He leaves behind his wife of 56 years, Dorothy, and three grown children, two of whom are also actors. Robert Mitchum was 79.



Arnold Schwarzenegger and George Clooney with director Joel Schumacher attend the "Batman and Robin" film premiere in Paris



today  
JULY 1997

LIFE IN THE BLACK TENT

comprehensive telephone guide for Jordan's restaurants, hotels, car rental agents, embassies, airlines, emergency

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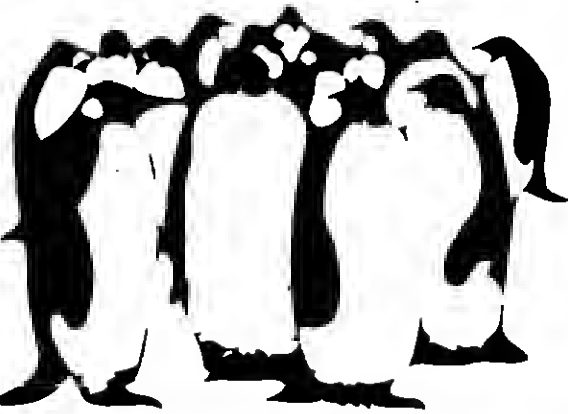
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## AROUND TOWN



## Korean expo expects huge crowd

MINISTER OF Trade and Industry Dr Hani Al Muiqi opens the Korean Products expo at the Amman International Motor Show. He is joined by the South Korean Ambassador in Amman Mr Jung-II-Ob. Dr Al Muiqi was deputizing for His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah bin Hussein. The expo which continues till 7 July, seeks to strengthen relations between South Korea and Jordan. ■



## Managing peace through the techniques of meditation

By Aida Tawil  
Special to The Star

Comfortably, close your eyes, and meditate for 15-20 minutes. You will find that the stress and pressure disappears naturally from your body and mind. You feel completely relaxed, says Dr Jagannath Patnaik, a stress management consultant from India who attended the United Nations University/International Leadership Academy program in Amman last month. Dr Patnaik has learnt this technique six years ago in India. He is an instrument for spreading

this knowledge of peace to various institutions, universities and the corporate sector in India. Presently, Dr Patnaik is working as an educational administrator in the Vinayaku Missions Research Foundation in India which has 30-odd institutions in the areas of medicine, technology and management. He also visits group institutions and teaches them stress management.

Dr Patnaik says it is easy to learn and practice meditation. "It is not concentration, contemplation or religion practice. No dietary restrictions, no postures and so on. It is a scientific technique through meaningless sounds

which drives your thoughts beyond," he adds. Peacelessness can be felt as stress and pressure due to family, work, social and other obligations. In its more serious condition, peacelessness is manifested in breakdowns, addictions, abuse, crime, emotional imbalances and psychosomatic ailments. While medical science has helped relieve stress symptoms, and psychology has contributed toward understanding the psyche, there continues a genuine search for a functional and empowering spirituality which can produce within the individual, a calm and relaxed state of mind, asserts Dr Patnaik.

People ask for peace, but whose responsibility is that? Can anyone who remains peaceless be an instrument for peace? Today policy-makers are dedicated to making, building and keeping peace. Emphasis is placed on the value of peace precisely because of the great peacelessness that exists and which has infiltrated our lives far deeper than we care to admit, he points out.

Peace must begin with each of us. Through quiet and serious reflection on its meaning, new and creative ways can be found to foster understanding, friendships and co-operation among all people.

Peace consists of pure thoughts, pure feelings and pure wishes. When the energy of thought, word, and action is balanced, stable and non-violent, the individual is at peace with the self. In relationships and with the world. To exercise the power of peace embraces the fundamental principle of spirituality. Look inward in order to look outward with courage, purpose and meaning. To recognise the original quality of the human soul as peace is to stop searching outside for peace. Through connection with the one eternal and unlimited source of peace, our own reservoirs overflow with silent strength. In its purest form, peace is inner silence filled with the power of truth, explains Dr Patnaik.

Programs and projects must include an emphasis on individual peace, offering proactive and practical means to peace, beginning



Patnaik

with the first step of knowing the inner-self. Talking about the advantages, Dr Patnaik says that one practices meditation regularly for 15-20 minutes. It improves behavior, interpersonal relationships, improves health, better memory power, better sleep, better understanding ability, positive thinking, gives better profits and productivity within the company, better relationship with the family and so on.

Relying on various scientific studies, he emphasized that through meditation techniques one can experience the real bliss and happiness within self.

Discussions are man-made. This is only due to the stress and pressure on one-self in everyday life. Meditation helps to overcome it. Every human being has innate worth which is pure and virtuous. Such a mindset guarantees ultimate victory, Dr Patnaik concludes. ■



## A new British Airways takes off

A new British Airways takes off for the new millennium with a new strategic direction and a new identity, backed by a £6.5 billion three-year investment program in new services, products, aircraft, facilities and training.

Based on the largest consumer research exercise in travel history, the aim is to establish British Airways as the undisputed leader in world travel as it flies into the 21st century.

The new unveiled corporate identity is the 'visual promise' of the improvements for customers flowing from the company's repositioning.

It reflects British values, and the nation's modern attributes—friendly, youthful, diverse and cosmopolitan outlook.

It underpins sweeping corporate and cultural change which began with the launch of BA's business efficiency program last September. It had a wide-ranging review of every aspect of the company's business, ensuring it is equipped with the right people, and the skills for the challenges of the millennium.

British Airways is aiming to set new standards in customer service, deliver the best financial performance and evolve from being an airline to a world travel business with the flexibility to stretch its hand into new areas.

Radical changes within the industry—the emergence of super groupings such as the recently announced 'Star alliance', the growth of low cost niche carriers and changes in the regulatory climate—have also had an impact on the airlines strategic review.

At the heart of the new corporate identity is the creation of more than 50 world images which will appear on the airline's 300 aircraft plus ground vehicles, stationary, signage, timetables, baggage tags and ticket wallets that bears the British Airways name.

The company's corporate palette of red, white and blue, is being brightened and lightened, more closely drawn from the British Union flag, to reflect the BA's British heritage.

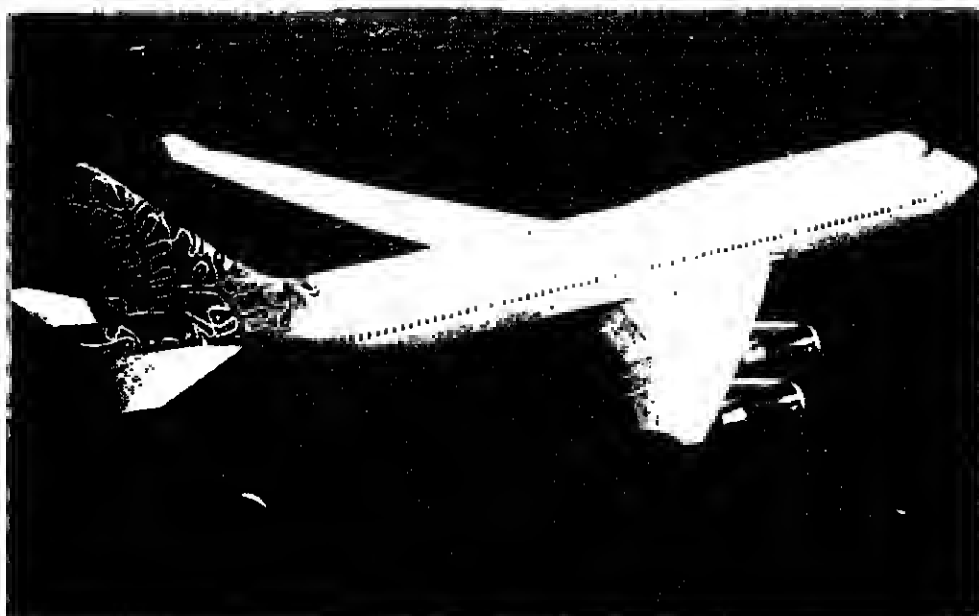
The name 'British Airways' will be printed in a new softer, rounder typeface, and a new three-dimensional speedmark has evolved from the flat red speeding symbol along the side of the aircraft fuselage.

Fifty world images are planned, and 15 unveiled including a tartan from the Scottish Highlands, a tent panel from Egypt, calligraphy from China, a Japanese painting, Delft potteryware, a Polish paper cut, murals from the Ndebele tribe of South Africa, a wood carving from North America, a painting from the bush people of the Kalahari Desert and a stitched Union flag from Chatham Dockyard, Kent, England.

Three images from Germany will be used by British Airways' subsidiary Deutsche BA.

One of the first aircraft off the paint-line at Heathrow was Concorde, British Airways' supersonic flagship, bearing a red, white and blue, interpretation of the British Union Flag on its tail which has been based on the original flag used by Admiral Nelson in the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar.

The aim is to present British Airways as an airline of the World. This is particularly



A BA 747 showing on its tails one of the 50 world images commissioned by the airline as part of its new identity

reflected in the world images, which celebrate and unite the communities British Airways serves. They reflect the company's awareness of cultural differences of its customers—three in every five of whom origi-

nate from outside the UK.

The airline's existing livery designed by Landor Associates, of San Francisco was introduced in 1984 to prepare for a new era of privatization.

On the wings of this identity, British Airways became a case history in change management, turning around a company considered to be "Bloody Awful" into one of the most profitable privatized companies and the world's leading international airline, carrying more people to more destinations than any other airline.

All the airline's research confirms that it now needs to change again if it is to continue as the industry leader into the 21st century.

The new corporate identity created by London-based design consultancy Newell and Sorrell, will create a new global personality for British Airways for the new era ahead.

Bob Ayling, British Airways' Chief Executive, said "To stand still in this industry is to be overtaken. For British Airways, this is not an option. To continue to be the world leader, we have to do again what we did in the last decade, put clear blue sky between us and our rivals, people have suggested we may somehow be turning our backs on Britain. Nothing could be further from the truth."

"We have to reach out to people around the world and deliver service that meets their needs. They want to deal with people who speak their language."

The company has set aside £2 million for the world images and the overall designs. Implementing it will cost £60 million over three years, although most of this would have been spent on the regular repainting of aircraft and signage and restocking of stationery if the old livery had been retained. ■

## An evening of triumph for Horizon

Horizon Advertising proudly attracted the lustrous lights of victory during the Anba Advertising Awards last month, at the Sheraton Hotel in Kuwait.

The agency stepped up to the crowning stage twice that evening to receive two coveted awards. The first one was for the best creative in the "Investment" category for the Kuwait Finance House.

The award was received by Mr Saad Hijawi, president of the Horizon Network and Managing Director of Horizon Kuwait. Expressing his feeling about this stimulating win he said "this is a great moment for me and Horizon. I am sure everyone at the agency shares the same feeling and I'm definitely looking forward for more and bigger achievements." Mr Hijawi thanked the Kuwait Finance House for their trust in Horizon and for making the joint triumph possible by their support of creativity that is effective among consumers and an award winner among advertising professionals.

The triumph peaked when the laureate Horizon was up on the stage again to receive their second award for "Best Press Campaign of 1996" which was also won for the Kuwait Finance House. This category conceived the notion of the best campaign for the entire year, which emphasizes

the weight given for such a win. Such an award brings pride and ecstasy due to the fact that many well presented campaigns were up against the Kuwait Finance House campaign.

The prestigious award was accepted by Mr Said Zeineddine, Senior Manager Account Services of Horizon Kuwait whose speech on the occasion thoughtfully conveyed "...special thanks to our creative team who is the real hero behind this award."

Whilst proudly and joyfully celebrating, Horizon team renewed its commitment in continuing to produce outstanding creative advertising that would serve the interest of its clients best in the marketplace.

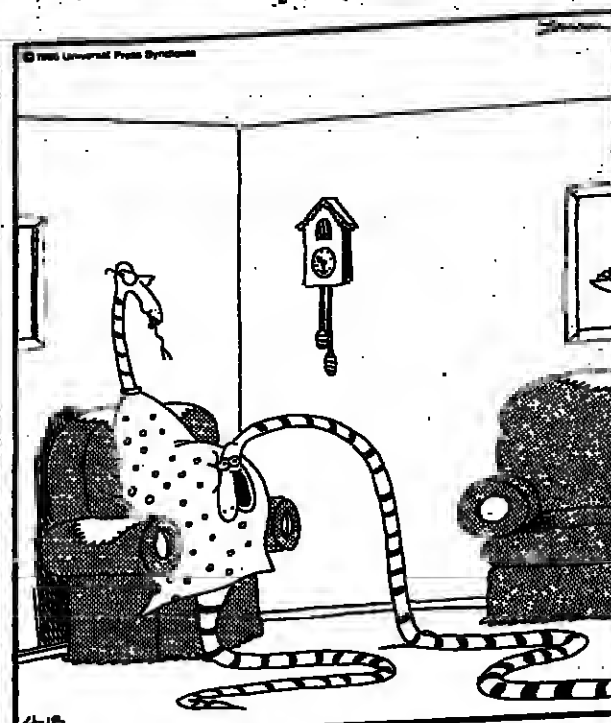
Besides the Anba Advertising Awards, there were other triumphant moments for Horizon Kuwait and the Horizon Network. In 1996 Horizon Kuwait won the Finalist Award for GTC Paints "Language of Colors" campaign at the New York International Advertising Festival. 1995 was a success for Horizon Dubai for winning a certificate of merit at the Cresta International Advertising Awards in New York. That same year, the Horizon Dubai Office won the IAA Advertising Awards in Dubai for Mercedes-Benz. ■



Hijawi

## THE FAR SIDE

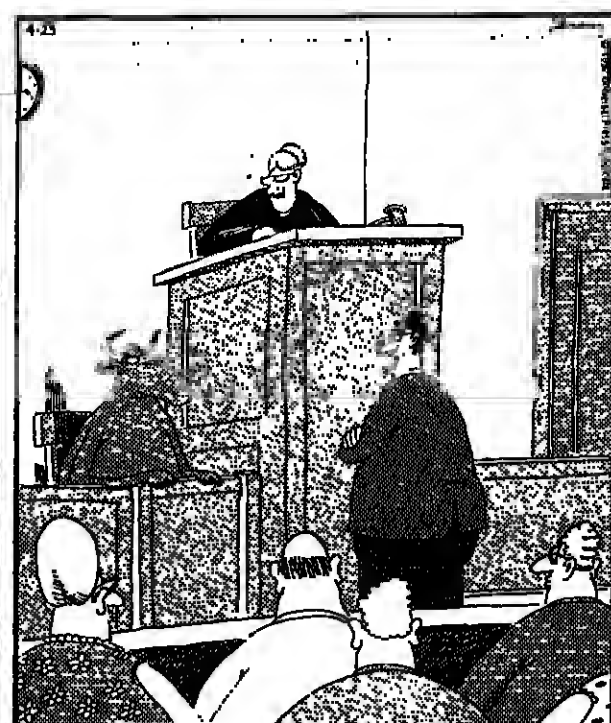
By GARY LARSON



"I hear 'em! ... Gee, there must be a hundred of the little guys squirming around in there!"



"Oh, my word, Helen! You play, too? ... And here I always thought you were just a songbird."



"Look, we know how you did it — how is no longer the question. What we now want to know is why... Why now, brown cow?"

## SLAPSTIX

A fanatic is a man who does what he thinks the Lord would do if he knew the facts of the case.

## AGENDA

Exhibitions  
■ "The Contemporary Arab Artists Exhibition" showing the works of more than 60 artists from the Arab world, continues at Darat al Funun, runs till 24 July.  
■ Paintings by one contemporary Iraqi artist, entitled "Ecology & Environment in the Iraqi Art", at the Royal Society of Fine Arts, runs till 12 July.  
■ Artworks of Sami Gamrah entitled "Biyoot Min Al Sol" continues at Al Tagadam Association (Dabouq-Al Hummar) till 14 July.  
■ An exhibition entitled

"Silver Jewelry" continues at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of Noor Al Hussein Foundation till 20 July.

■ The artworks of Karim Rassin continues at Orient Gallery till 10 July.

Film  
■ Max Ernst at Darat al Funun, Thursday 3 April at 6:00 pm. (Eng.)

■ How To Be A Ballerina at British Council, Tuesday 8 July, at 5:00 pm. (Eng.)

■ Yes, Prime Minister at British Council, Wednesday 9 July, at 5:00 pm. (Eng.)

JULY 1997

The Star

Program from

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

- 8:00 - Holy Quran
- 8:30 - French Programs
- 9:00 - Final Ladies' Tennis
- 9:30 - News Headlines
- 10:00 - Hammer with Mr. Cooper
- 10:30 - Magazine Zero One
- 11:00 - Press
- 11:30 - Time Trav
- 12:00 - News at Ten
- 12:30 - MacGyver
- 1:00 - Feature Film

SUNDAY

- 8:00 - Holy Quran
- 8:30 - French Programs
- 9:00 - Tennis Men's Final
- 9:30 - World's 100
- 10:00 - News in French
- 10:30 - News Headlines
- 11:00 - Fresh Prince of Bel
- 11:30 - Cinema: Cinema
- 12:00 - The Churchills
- 12:30 - Renegade
- 1:00 - News at Ten
- 1:30 - One West Wapika
- 2:00 - Sisters

MONDAY

- 8:00 - Holy Quran
- 8:30 - Spino
- 9:00 - Problem Child
- 9:30 - Blue Heavies
- 10:00 - Ocean Girl
- 10:30 - Nature 10
- 11:00 - Fiction
- 11:30 - French Programs
- 12:00 - News in French
- 12:30 - News Headlines
- 1:00 - Murphy Brown
- 1:30 - The Giant Nile
- 2:00 - Babylon 5
- 2:30 - Highlander
- 3:00 - News at Ten

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# Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

## Jacquerie sanglante en Egypte contre la nouvelle loi agraire

Trois paysans ont été tués et deux autres grièvement blessés mardi dans la province égyptienne de Minya lors de manifestations armées contre la nouvelle loi agraire qui risque en octobre prochain de priver un grand nombre d'agriculteurs de leur maigre gagne-pain. Un agriculteur de 60 ans, une femme et un enfant de 14 ans ont trouvé la mort lors d'échanges de tirs entre les paysans et les forces de l'ordre intervenues pour mettre un terme à des émeutes qui duraient depuis plus d'une heure dans les villages de Tawfikyo et Minyo, à 250 kilomètres au sud du Caire. Plusieurs centaines de paysans ont mis le feu à ou moins cinq maisons et une dizaine de véhicules de propriétaires terriens avant de couper le trafic sur la route Le Caire-Assouan (sud de l'Egypte) et d'incendier un autobus après avoir occupé leurs occupants. Ils ont également bloqué le trafic ferroviaire entre les deux villes en dressant des barrières de pierres sur les rails. Il s'agit de la plus importante action de protestation contre cette loi agraire adoptée en 1992 qui prévoit une libéralisation totale du loyer des terres agricoles au terme d'un délai de grâce de cinq ans s'achevant début octobre. Alors que la révolution nassérienne de 1952 avait imposé aux propriétaires de louer leurs terres à bas prix, sans pouvoir augmenter les loyers ni échanger de locataires, à partir de cet automne, ils pourront récupérer leurs terres s'ils le souhaitent. Selon les partis d'opposition et les experts, environ six millions de personnes seraient affectées par la mise en application de cette loi.



Education

## Tawjihi nouvelle formule: le cauchemard des lycéens

Ce passeport pour la vie professionnelle s'est concentré cette année sur une seule session, comme le baccalauréat français. Du coup, un vent de terreur a soufflé parmi les élèves et certains étaient prêts à tout pour obtenir leur diplôme. Malgré les menaces de sanctions, la fraude ne recule pas les salles d'examen et le fossé se creuse entre les lycéens et un système éducatif pousse-au-crime.

Reportages de Nahed Al-Khlouf et Bayan Salman

Pendant un quart d'heure, elle est restée immobile, le visage caché dans les mains : « Quelqu'un veut bien me dire pour qui sont faits ces examens ? Pour nous ou pour nos enseignants ? ». Réaction presque banale d'une élève effondrée en train de passer le tawjihi, comme 92 000 autres de ses camarades.

Dans l'ensemble, la première épreuve, l'arabe, a été bien accueillie par les élèves. Mais cette impression positive s'est rapidement effacée lors des suivantes : « A la sortie de notre deuxième examen, nous avons compris que le précédent n'était qu'un appât et que de plus grands pièges nous attendaient », insistent plusieurs élèves. Depuis cet examen, effectivement, les mêmes plaintes reviennent : les lycéens trouvent que les sujets proposés sont inadéquats. « Nous étions face à des questions sans rapport avec ce qu'on nous a enseigné, notamment pour les mathématiques », s'indignent-ils. « Et pourtant on nous avait promis que les questions ne seraient jamais hors programme ».

Une contestation partagée par un professeur de mathématiques, qui préfère garder l'anonymat : « On pourrait créer un examen difficile mais inspiré de ce que les élèves apprennent pendant l'année. Je ne suis pas pour quelle raison le comité des examens continue de poser des sujets hors programme ». Pour ce professeur en école privée, « affirmer ainsi les élèves le conduit tout droit dans une impasse. D'autres enseignants se montrent déjà inquiets pour l'année prochaine. « J'ai l'impression qu'entre les élèves et moi il n'y aura plus la même confiance qu'avant », regrette

un autre professeur de mathématiques dans une école publique. La longueur excessive des épreuves est l'autre reproche formulé par les jeunes : « En géologie, il y a eu beaucoup de questions mais nous n'avons eu que deux heures pour y répondre. J'ai dû écrire sans réfléchir », raconte Rasha. Sur les durées, trop courtes des épreuves, Muntah Al-Masri, le ministre de l'éducation et de l'enseignement, promet de revoir sa copie pour l'année prochaine. En revanche, il reste intransigeant sur la difficulté des questions : « Les étudiants se plaignent, alors qu'ils se contentent souvent d'apprendre leurs cours par cœur sans se donner la peine de réfléchir par eux-mêmes. Les questions difficiles sont inévitables tout simplement parce qu'elles mesurent les aptitudes de chacun ».

**Quitte ou double**  
Au-delà des plaintes et des rumeurs habituelles, de graves incidents ont tué de même un lieu dans certaines écoles du gouvernorat de Balqa (voir ci-contre). La nouvelle organisation du tawjihi serait à l'origine de ces débordements. Il y a eu en effet beaucoup de changements, dans l'édition 97. Les élèves doivent désormais passer leur bac en une seule fois à la fin de l'année scolaire, alors qu'avant, il se partageait en deux sessions. D'autres matières font par ailleurs leur apparition : géologie, culture scientifique ou éducation philosophique. Enfin de nouveaux livres d'études ont été introduits dans les classes, avec une nouvelle pédagogie, pour laquelle, selon certains directeurs d'établissements, les enseignants n'ont pas été suffisamment formés. Apparemment,



ces évolutions n'ont pas été bien perçues par les élèves qui y voient une certaine injustice : « avec une seule session pour évaluer toute une année scolaire, le tawjihi maintenant, c'est quitte ou double et cela a de quoi nous effrayer », s'insurgent beaucoup d'entre eux. Une angoisse observée par les enseignants : « Je devais à la fois enseigner et soutenir moralement les élèves », explique Hani Al-Salqa, professeur de chimie, « certains ont vécu toute l'année scolaire avec la peur d'échouer ». Et il y a de quoi. L'an passé, 47% seulement des élèves ont réussi leur tawjihi.

### Papa choisit pour moi

La responsable des examens généraux de Salt a plus loin : « cette nouvelle formule terrorise encore plus les étudiants qui sont alors prêts à tout, à n'importe quel prix ». Le système trouve aussi ses défenseurs, au premier rang desquels bien sûr, le ministre de l'éducation et

l'enseignement : « ce système a été adopté par la plupart des pays du monde. C'est le fruit de plus de dix ans de travail et nous avons même pris l'avis de parents en leur faisant parvenir un questionnaire. La moitié d'entre eux était favorable au nouveau tawjihi ».

Finalement c'est toujours l'histoire du verre à moitié vide ou à moitié plein. Il reste qu'un fossé se creuse entre les élèves et le système éducatif. Sur qui rejeter la faute ? Les responsabilités sont partagées. Parfois, certains adolescents se retrouvent dans une filière que leurs parents ont choisie pour eux. C'est le cas d'Amari : « mon père ne se soucie pas de mon avenir », regrette-t-il, au moment de passer le tawjihi pour la deuxième fois. « Il m'a obligé à choisir la filière scientifique car c'est plus prestigieuse et les gens autour de moi me respectent davantage. J'ai dû accepter pour qu'il ne soit pas fâché ».

## L'antisèche, seule réponse à l'échec scolaire

A la suite d'une tricherie généralisée, l'examen d'anglais a été annulé dans trois écoles publiques de Salt. Quatre lycéens sont privés de tawjihi pour au moins un an. Les autres repassent l'épreuve dans deux jours.

**Renforcement des** forces de police, transport de tous les élèves avant et après l'examen. Cette fois, tout est prévu pour éviter l'opération-commando d'il y a trois semaines. Les lycéens qui planchent à nouveau samedi sur l'épreuve d'anglais ont intérêt à se tenir à carreau, même si Mahmoud Kdiah, responsable des examens généraux, assure que les renforts de sécurité seront surtout là pour éviter des perturbations extérieures.

Opération-commando : le mot n'est-il pas trop fort ? Lisez plutôt. Le 12 juin dernier dans le lycée public Adib Wahbeh, un jeune homme prend la place d'un autre pour passer l'anglais. Une fois introduit dans la salle d'examen, l'intrus débale le questionnaire puis s'échappe sans que les gardiens puissent l'arrêter. Le chef d'examen rentre alors de prévenir l'Académie de Salt, sans succès. Le téléphone a été coupé.

Dehors, des complètes attendent le voleur dans une voiture. Un professeur d'anglais aurait alors donné toutes les réponses. La feuille ainsi complétée puis photocopiée en plusieurs exemplaires, un individu s'est chargé d'en faire la distribution sur les lieux de l'examen, en les jetant à la volée. Une manne inespérée pour les lycéens d'Adib Wahbeh qui se servent allégrement. Mais ils n'ont pas été les seuls à en profiter. Cette fraude organisée s'est produite également dans deux autres écoles publiques de Salt, celle des Garçons, la plus ancienne de Jordanie et celle de Yarga. Au total, quatre élèves seulement ont été sanctionnés. Ceux qui, selon le ministère de l'éducation, ont participé directement aux opérations. Deux seront interdits de tawjihi pendant un an. Le double pour les deux autres.

Pendant deux ans, Samer al-Halou ne pourra donc pas passer son baccalauréat. « Pourquoi moi ? », se répète-t-il dans une grande douleur sans comprendre ce qui lui arrive. « J'ai pris la feuille de réponses comme tout le monde et j'ai commencé à écrire », se rappelle-t-il. « J'appartiens à un milieu de m'en empêcher en tirant une feuille avant de me laisser tranquille comme tous les autres, car il était déposé par la situation ». Quelques instants plus tard, les forces de l'ordre sont intervenues, maitraques au poing pour annuler l'épreuve.



**Des photocopies miniatures**  
Le lendemain, Samer est convoqué au poste de police : « ils m'ont accusé d'avoir menacé l'opérateur avec un couteau. Mais ce n'est pas vrai, et ce couteau ne m'appartenait pas et je ne l'ai pas utilisé ». Selon certains lycéens, il n'aurait fait que se mettre en colère contre le surveillant. Toujours est-il que le jeune garçon s'est retrouvé en prison pendant 15 jours plutôt qu'insolite. L'opérateur a rencontré un vieillard qui soupçonne d'avoir participé à cette opération alors qu'il ne sait même pas écrire son nom », raconte-t-il (désabusé) et sans éviter la terrible sanction.

Chaque année, ce type d'infractions se répète. Le ministère de l'éducation en est conscient mais ne propose que la répression pour combattre la tricherie. Or ce

phénomène est surtout révélateur d'un système éducatif pousse-au-crime (voir ci-contre).

Le directeur général de l'éducation du gouvernorat d'Al-Balqa, Zaid Al-Dabas, condamne bien entendu les tricheries mais il constate aussi l'étendue de la gangrène : « Les meilleurs professeurs font un résumé des cours de l'année pour aider à préparer le tawjihi. Pour les étudiants, cela devient la bible et ils convertissent les livres en photocopies miniatures pour en faire des photocopies miniatures et s'en servir comme anti-sèche. En fait, il faudrait assurer la surveillance des bibliothèques un mois avant la période des examens. Chaque jour », précise-t-il encore, « une librairie peut gagner au moins 100 dinars de cette façon-là ». La directrice de l'école généraliste de filles de Salt, Nahmad Abou Taleb accuse carrément les professeurs, surtout masculins, de « collaborer avec les librairies pour se faire de l'argent ». La fraude s'organise aussi le jour même de l'examen. Un apprenant affirme par exemple que certains de ses collègues choisissent leurs salles d'examen et se retrouvent ainsi à « surveiller » leurs enfants, cousins ou voisins.

Ce n'est pas tout. Pour Zaid Al-Dabas, les parents sont souvent coupables car ils encouragent leurs enfants à tricher. Un parent à Salt se défend en dénonçant « la politique de l'éducation en Jordanie qui contribue à aggraver la situation puisque, jusqu'à la 11ème classe de première en France, il n'y a jamais de redoublement même si l'étudiant est faible ».

Chaque année, ce type d'infractions se répète. Le ministère de l'éducation en est conscient mais ne propose que la répression pour combattre la tricherie. Or ce

Logement

## Vallée du Jourdain: les destructions inutiles

Le calme est revenu à Deir Alla. Les habitants ont obtenu un délai supplémentaire pour se mettre en règle et continuer à vivre sur les terres de l'Etat. Au bout du compte, des blessés, des maisons abattues et beaucoup d'amertume.

**Le dossier** des atteintes aux terres de l'Etat est volumineux et la faute n'est pas toujours du côté des citoyens. Pire, le gouvernement pratique deux poids, deux mesures dans

l'application de la loi, souvent au détriment des plus pauvres. Selon une décision judiciaire de 1993, toutes les maisons construites, en violation de la loi, sur des terres de l'Etat, doivent être détruites. Or, l'année

dernière, un cas semblable à celui de Deir Alla, s'est produit à Jebel Hussein, dans le camp des réfugiés palestiniens à Amman. Le gouvernement a préféré fermer les yeux, sans doute pour des raisons politiques. A Zarka et à Aqaba également, de telles infractions ont été commises mais les contentieux avec les tribus concernées et influentes a été traité par le dialogue. Ces exemples montrent que dans la Vallée du Jourdain, l'épreuve de force aurait pu être évitée, car elle n'a fait que rouvrir les plaies, sans rien régler.

Une visite du Premier ministre est tout de même attendue la semaine prochaine pour effacer les séquelles des affrontements violents qui ont lieu à Darar, un village de la région de Deir Alla dans la nuit du 22 au 23 juin dernier.

Cette nuit-là, des forces de sécurité, accompagnées de bulldozers, sont venues faire appliquer la loi. Les citoyens (ap-

partenant en majorité à la tribu Chatti) ont entravé les travaux des policiers et des hélicoptères ont éclaté entre les deux parties. Bilan : 16 policiers et une vingtaine d'habitants blessés, des maisons détruites et des arbres arrachés. Des femmes et des enfants se sont réfugiés dans la maison du député Ali Chatti. Cela n'a pas empêché les policiers de la poursuivre et de les humilier, selon la famille du député. La mère de celui-ci a été hospitalisée et son père, malade, a été arrêté après ces émeutes avant d'être libéré quatre jours plus tard.

Il semble que Jawad Anani, le premier ministre par intérim (Majali était à l'étranger) avait donné des ordres au ministre de l'Intérieur pour différer le raid à Darar. Celui-ci aurait refusé et a ordonné d'assaut par l'intermédiaire du gouverneur de Balqa, responsable de la région de Deir Alla. On connaît la suite.

Soleiman Sweiss



Les habitants de Deir Alla dont les maisons ont été rasées exigent du gouvernement un dédommagement.

## Le tour du monde d'un homme tout terrain

La Jordanie est le 32ème pays que Christian Meynier traverse dans son périple. Le temps d'une courte escale, ce professeur de mathématiques nous a parlé de son aventure commencée il y a plus de trois ans et qu'il espère achever en 1998. A 45 ans, Christian a décidé de plonger dans l'inconnu... à « bicyclette ».

### Dès son enfance,

Christian Meynier croasse le rêve de parcourir le monde avec la seule énergie de ses jambes, à pied, à vélo, ou même à ski. Un jour d'octobre 1993, il se sent prêt pour la grande Aventure. Après quatre ans d'économies, ce célibataire sans enfants quitte le décor bucolique de Thonon, sur les rives du lac Léman. Sur VTT sous le bras, il part en Terre de feu, à l'extrême sud de l'Amérique Latine, où il établit son départ.

Après les Amériques, Christian Meynier rejoint l'Océanie puis l'Asie et le Moyen-Orient. Avant d'arriver à Amman, les Saoudiens ont refusé de lui octroyer un visa de transit. Le vétéran a alors été contraint de prendre l'avion pour atteindre la Jordanie. Après la Syrie et la Turquie, il rejoindra l'Europe de l'Est pour terminer son odyssée en France en mai-juin 1998.

Sans aucun esprit de compétition et sans ambition d'établir un record, Christian veut donner un autre sens à son expérience en solitaire. A chaque fois, il se documente sur la géographie des pays qu'il intéresse et

choisit l'itinéraire en fonction de deux priorités : la montagne et le désert. « Je suis capable de parcourir des centaines de kilomètres pour un paysage », avoue-t-il d'une voix égale, les mains dans les poches de son pantalon à carreaux.

Cet amoureux de la nature aime observer les animaux. Il a ainsi vécu des moments forts comme des rencontres avec des ours et des loups. En Alaska, Christian se rappelle un face-à-face extraordinaire avec un loup : « Il me scrutait de ses yeux jaunes, c'était une émotion intense : j'étais heureux et je n'avais pas peur. Cette image restera fixée dans ma mémoire à jamais ».

L'accueil que les populations des petits villages montagnards lui réservent est souvent beau-

coup plus chaleureux que celui des grandes villes de plaine. Les réactions des gens à l'apparition de cet étranger à vélo - montagnard, mi-extraterrestre - fatigué et assoiffé, varient cependant d'un pays à l'autre. Finalement,

la durée de son séjour se mesure à la période de validité de son visa mais aussi à son intérêt de voyageur. Au Japon par exemple, l'accueil fabuleux des paysans, montagnards et moines bouddhistes, l'a encouragé à passer les trois mois d'hiver rigoureux avec eux.

L'obstacle de la langue (bien qu'il parle couramment français, anglais et espagnol) n'en est souvent pas un. « Si l'envie de communiquer est réciproque, on peut toujours dialoguer, même

sans parler la même langue », soutient-il.

Christian se prépare déjà à un retour difficile à une vie sociale normale. Appuyé sur la selle de son vélo aux roues pleines de poussière, il ne sait pas encore ce qu'il va faire une fois rentré chez lui : rien n'est encore décidé à l'exception près : la publication du livre qu'il écrit sur son voyage. « Ce n'est pas un journal de bord, mais un recueil des histoires qui évaluent les moments les plus forts de cette aventure également intérieure, et qui s'intituleront Le collier de rêves », souligne-t-il en insistant sur le pluriel du deuxième nom. A la façon des perles d'un collier, les chapitres s'enfilent comme les routes qui ont fait naître toutes ces histoires.

Avec une moyenne de 100 km par jour et 35 kilos de bagages (vélo compris), Christian aura traversé plus de cinquante pays à la fin de son périple. Il aimerait avoir un enfant à qui raconter toutes ces aventures, mais n'exclut pas la possibilité de s'engager un jour dans une autre boucle autour du monde.

Anca de Maio

## Cousteau rejoint le Monde du Silence

**Bonnet rouge** et tunique bleu de mer. Deux marques de fabrique incontournables du personnage du Commandant Cousteau. En quel personnage ? Sa vie ressemble à celle d'un héros de Jules Verne. Cet explorateur infatigable a parcouru toutes les mers du globe à bord son navire la Calypso, des icebergs de l'Antarctique aux atolls coralliens du Pacifique. Mondiallement connu, Jacques-Yves Cousteau s'est taillé la réputation d'un champion de l'environnement. « L'enchevêtrement », ainsi qualifié par le président Chirac, est mort la semaine dernière à l'âge de 87 ans, après avoir révélu au monde certains mystères marins. Il est l'auteur en effet de nombreux documentaires sur la faune et la flore des océans. Cousteau, qui reçut sa première caméra à

l'âge de neuf ans, remporta ainsi plusieurs récompenses cinématographiques pour ses films. Le Monde du Silence est notamment devenu l'une de ses réalisations les plus célèbres en obtenant la palme d'or au festival de Cannes en 1956. Caricaturé dans les Guignols de l'Info (émission satirique française), Cousteau, qui parlait l'anglais avec un accent français à couper à la machette, était régulièrement élu par les Français comme la personnalité la plus populaire du pays. Né dans le sud-ouest de la France, près de Bordeaux, l'océanographe a passé son enfance à Paris et New York avant de faire ses études à l'école navale de Brest (sur la pointe ouest de la France). C'est dans sa ville natale de Saint-André-de-Cubzac qu'il doit être inhumé aujourd'hui.



## C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

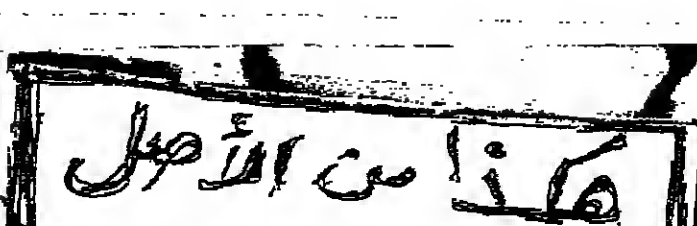
Cycle consacré à l'acteur Lino Ventura. Un taxi pour Toubrouk, de Denys de la Patellière (1960) : lundi 7 juillet à 20h30 au Centre culturel de la coopération linguistique.

Exposition

Jusqu'au 29 juillet au CCCL, la photographe Jan Kassay expose ses plus beaux clichés de fleurs.

## Septembre 1998 : du VTT en Jordanie

Il y aura une quarantaine de participants à l'expédition du 1er septembre 1998 sur « La Route des Rois ». Pour la première fois, la Jordanie accueillera un raid VTT. Cette initiative est portée par une petite entreprise française de services touristiques, l'« Développement (VED) ». Au programme : une semaine de courses sur un parcours très accidenté entre Amman et Aqaba et peut-être un prolongement jusqu'à Petra. Le départ du théâtre romain, à Amman, sera à 8h30. Les participants seront également privés, si l'expédition est autorisée, d'un séjour à Amman et l'histoire », explique Serge Morin, l'un des responsables de la VED. L'entreprise s'engage à ne pas faire de la course à vélo un événement à but lucratif. Elle a déjà financé deux raids à travers le monde. La dernière Jordanienne s'est terminée à Amman le 1er juin 1997, avec moins de 5000 francs, environ 7000 francs par personne, toutes dépenses comprises, et les organisateurs attendent pour la participation des Jordanais.





Books@Cafe

# Hottest place in town

By Sammy Rumman  
Special to The Star

Books@Cafe, which recently opened on the First Circle, is one of the hippest hangouts in Amman. Its style and atmosphere is one of a kind.

sometimes students meet for book readings and discussions. Artists occasionally come in and paint just as musicians are free to play their instruments. Mr Al-Jazzerah casually says, "here it is OK to be yourself and simply relax."

hand-made statues and sculptures give the place a serene atmosphere.

Upstairs one can sit to read a variety of magazines and newspapers, free of charge.

While one is reading they can choose from the 82 flavors of coffee and tea. Also on the menu are soft drinks, pastries, candies, low calorie cakes, and delicious sandwiches.

There are five computers each equipped with internet facilities, email, and programs

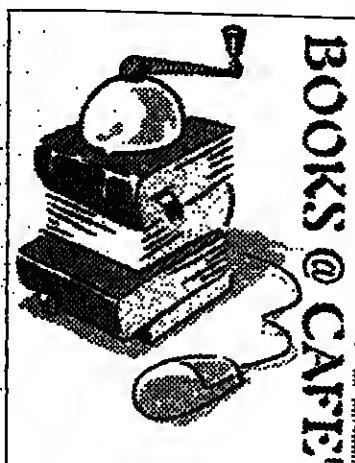
such as America Online, chatlines, Yahoo, and Netscape Navigator. The rate is JD 5 per hour which includes computer assistance when needed. Email accounts can also be set up upon request.

Numerous sitting rooms are available both inside and outside. They are all very comfortable, casual, and relaxing.

A number of internet cafe's are popping up all over Amman, but Books@Cafe is truly in a league of its own. If you're looking for the hottest

spot in town or just want to sit back and relax visit the Books@Cafe.

Come check out Amman's most intriguing coffee shop. Peak hours are usually in the evenings. Directions: go down Rainbow Street, past the First Circle and take a right pass Firas Printing Press. For more information contact them by email: contact@books-cafe.com, telephone: 650457, fax: 650458, or visit their web site at <http://www.books-cafe.com>.



Internet cafes are very technical. Ours is like being at home," says Madhan Al-Jazzerah, co-owner of the cafe.

"The relaxing environment and tranquil surroundings is attracting many people from all walks of life."

"We've tried hard to make it casual and comfortable so anyone can walk in alone or with a group and enjoy themselves," adds Mr Al-Jazzerah.

The customer has complete freedom to do whatever he or she desires. One can sit down in a number of comfortable settings and read a book, magazine, or newspaper.

Businessmen hold their meetings at the cafe and

gift center which is sponsored by local companies and artists from across Amman. It features technical items such as radios, videos, TV's, computers, and CD's. Local artists and craftsmen have also contributed handbags, hats, paintings, statues, and even recycled soap and body washes.

The walls are lined with paintings and decorations while the ground features

## Experience the mysteries of the past at the Arabesque Cafe

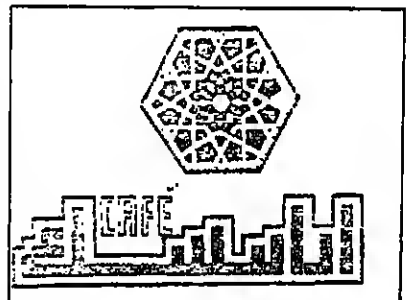
AMMAN BECOMES trendier everyday. With its alleyways, little nooks and crannies and beautiful cafes, it now boasts as the most favorite capital to be in.

The ambiance of the Arabesque Cafe conveys the rich atmosphere of the past. In traditional surroundings, you experience the twists of history but relax in modern settings.

Its General Manager Nasser Khanfer says that the Arabesque Cafe seeks to take you away from the hurly-burly of every day life into something that is exotic and relaxing.

In the summer season Arabesque presents the best programs by most prominent Arab artists every day of the week except Sundays. Artists Hitham Ammer and Najeeb Haddad perform the most beautiful songs. Organ performer, Foad Haddad also plays with the group.

The Arabesque Cafe caters to your every taste. There are also special settings for the family so they can enjoy a very pleasant surroundings.



**Books@Cafe**

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## Villa Cafe in Um Otheina A place to enjoy the ambiance

VILLA CAFE in Um Otheina is just the latest to be established. Owned by the Al Mawasin Tourist Investment Co., Villa Cafe gives a very distinctive service to the initiated, to people who want to go out and enjoy themselves. It is a member of the international World for 2 organization.

Set in beautiful terraced surroundings, the scent of flowers and inviting trees, you can enjoy a relaxed easy-paced atmosphere and enjoy the very best of light catering. As well as providing the traditional tea, coffee and pastries, it has 100 flavored cocktail fruit juices.

The ambiance of the place coupled with the carefully selected music, is designed to bring out your most cheerful side.

lo Villa Cafe you also feel at home, feel at a place you want to stay and watch the world go by. This is only topped up by the efficient service that is matched by the smiling faces of the boss. The coffee house is set in a beautiful villa. Hence Villa Cafe. Situated in a well-to-do district, it is surrounded by modern villas.

Villa Cafe can cater for up to 250 people and can hold parties and receptions. A 20 percent discount is given for groups of 10 and above and 10 percent under that.



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